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Jean Baptiste Louvet
From an engraving by F. Bonneville, 1795.

LOUVET:

REVOLUTIONIST & ROMANCE-WRITER

BY

JOHN RIVERS

With 18 Illustrations, including a Photogravure Frontispiece

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TO MY WIFE
ELISE RIVERS, *née* DUCHAMP.

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PREFACE

CARLYLE'S contemptuous reference to, and summary dismissal of, *Faublas* in his *French Revolution* have made at least the name of that romance familiar to English readers, and most have been content to pass on their way regarding its author as nothing more than a typical eighteenth century purveyor of the superfluities of naughtiness. If we except M. Aulard's biographical introduction to his admirable edition of Louvet's *Mémoires*, and the briefer notices attached to the various reprints of his works, no biography of Louvet has, so far as I am aware, been published either in French or English, although he was admittedly one of the most romantic figures in the whole history of the French Revolution.

Three years have passed since I discovered (as doubtless many others have done before me) that Louvet was not only a most brilliant writer, but also a most fascinating hero, of romance; and that the plain record of his life after writing that wonderful, though much maligned, romance, *Faublas*, is as breathlessly exciting and as full of picturesque incident and rapid movement as the most dashing tale ever imagined by Dumas himself. Indeed, it is not too much to affirm that whilst the historian will find in *Faublas* an invaluable picture of French society under the *ancien régime*, the novelist may confidently turn to the pages of his *Récit de mes périls* with the expectation of finding the material for half a dozen stirring romances.

Louvet's political activity covers the whole period from the fall of the Bastille to the beginning of the Directoire; and the account he has given us of his life is a human document of the greatest historical value, which

flashes light into many an obscure passage of those terrible days when the goddess Liberty became transformed, through the perversity of men, into a devouring Fury athirst for the blood of her noblest sons.

It is the tragic history of the Girondist Deputies who escaped to Normandy after their expulsion from the Convention on June 2nd, 1793. It tells of their proscription and flight across France, tracked like wolves from lair to lair, of their wanderings in disguise from one hiding-place to another, denied and betrayed by their dearest friends, until they were one by one driven to suicide, or led without trial to the scaffold. It is a narrative of base treachery and heroic courage, of ingratitude of the worst kind, and of self-sacrifice even unto death. There are surprises and hairbreadth escapes, terrible privations and sufferings met with stoical fortitude and unfailing cheerfulness, perils by day and by night, overcome by an ever-ready wit and resourcefulness ; and running like a golden thread through the whole history there is the charming love-story of Louvet and the sweet and gracious woman who shared his perils and inspired him with a lifelong and passionate devotion.

Louvet's *Récit de mes périls* was twice translated into English in 1795, but neither translation has since been reprinted. As the work was written under the most trying circumstances during his flight, there are many gaps in the history, and the continuity of the narrative is often interrupted by long tirades against his enemies, and by the introduction of other matter of little interest to the modern reader. I have, therefore, deemed it expedient in the present work to re-tell the story, closely following his own narrative wherever possible. By adopting this course, I have been able to piece together the record of his early and later life, and to supplement his own account by information gleaned from other sources. The task of sifting the literature of the period for facts bearing on Louvet and Lodoïska has been a laborious one, though by

no means devoid of compensations; and if I have succeeded in communicating to the reader a tithe of the interest in the French Revolution which the adventures of those exemplary lovers has aroused in me, I shall feel that my work has not been written in vain.

It gives me pleasure here to acknowledge my indebtedness to my old friend George Morton Willis, a descendant of Dr. Francis Willis (the famous Physician-in-Ordinary to George III.), who plays such an important part in the *dénouement* of *Faublas*, for many helpful suggestions, and for the stimulus derived from many conversations on the Revolution in general and the subject of this biography in particular.

JOHN RIVERS.

Hampstead.

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LOUVET:

Revolutionist and Romance-Writer

CHAPTER I

French society in 1760—Birth of Louvet—His parentage—His first adventure—An early Republican—A boy and girl love affair—The coming of Lodoïska—Her marriage—Louvet's despair—Influence of Voltaire and Rousseau—First literary success—He becomes a publisher's clerk—And is admitted *avocat*—"Studied ease" on £33 a year—Was Louvet of noble descent?—What he has to say on the subject—His double, Pierre Florent Louvet—He completes *Faublas*—His method of work—He is joined by Lodoïska—Origin of her name—Great success of *Faublas*—Kemble's melodrama *Lodoïska*.

FRANCE was in a bad way. The guns were still booming in the disastrous Seven Years' War, and the widows and orphans of the men who fell at Minden and Rossbach were scarcely out of mourning, when news came of that short and bloody conflict on the Plains of Quebec, which cost France half a continent and, victors and vanquished alike, the life of a great hero.

And at Versailles, Louis the Well-Beloved, an old man before his time, perverse, sad-eyed, and bored to death, lolled on the throne of his fathers, playing at love, the devil finding evil enough for his idle hands to do. Ostensibly the absolute master of

some twenty-five million subjects, he was in reality an abject slave of the petticoat—a puppet manipulated for the past fifteen years by a small, elegant, and slightly cross-eyed woman (if we may trust the portrait by Boucher), of infinite tact and subtlety, who made and unmade treaties and alliances, raised and deposed ministers and generals, organized defeat by dictating from her boudoir plans of battle for the French armies in the field, and ground the people to the dust beneath her little red-heeled shoe. After the disaster at Rossbach, there had been riots at Paris to secure the dismissal of her nominee, the back-stairs general the Prince de Soubise, whose military reverses, celebrated throughout Europe, had assured him in his rank and firmly established his renown.

For a moment her empire had trembled in the balance; but, with characteristic tenacity, she had insisted on maintaining her friend in his command, and had in the end got her way. Brilliant, witty, graceful, an artist to her finger-tips, she devoted her great talents to the amusement of the *blasé* monarch, and shrank from no iniquity to achieve this object.

Never were the social gifts of urbanity, courtesy and grace carried to a higher pitch than under the reign of the incomparable Marquise. No longer beautiful, her person had ceased to attract the King, but her voice alone could soothe and charm away those terrible fits of depression to which he was becoming more and more a prey. In 1760, of which year I write, she acted in no more intimate capacity than that which a modern dramatist has designated as "Mrs. Warren's profession." She maintained her

ascendancy to the last. Though Madame de Pompadour would have been described by Saint-Simon as a lady *de moyenne vertu*, she nevertheless had her good points; she was devoted to her daughter; she was admirably loyal to her friends; she caused Crébillon *fils* to be banished for writing *Les Égarements du cœur et de l'esprit*;* and her private apartments were decorated by Boucher.

Around these two figures circled a thousand or two charming women and free-and-easy carpet knights, who spent a great deal of their time in witty conversation, varied by games of love and chance; and, since the profits of the card-table are at best uncertain, they devoted their spare energies to intriguing for office.

The frivolity and license of the court had spread even to the Church. The Bishop of Béziers, we hear, having a mind to visit his *niece* with as little inconvenience as possible, cut a road at the expense of the province, through a neighbouring farm, and when the owner protested, not only forced him to sell his property at a great loss, but hounded him out of the country. Nor was the custom of taking unto themselves *nieces* confined to the prelates; it soon became a common practice among the lesser clergy. During the Revolution the Abbé Delille, for instance, met a young woman at Stuttgart whom he brought to Paris to keep house for him. Her education had been sadly neglected, and when Rivarol visited the pair,

* Not, we suspect, because she was shocked by the impropriety of that frigid fiction, although that was the pretext, but because she saw in it certain shrewd home-thrusts at herself.

her behaviour displeased the guest so much that he said to his host :

" Since you were able to choose your niece, I think you might have made a better choice."

" Poverty and privilege," says Arthur Young, " divided the realm " ; and peculation in high places went naked and unashamed. France was in a very bad way.

Rousseau was putting the finishing touches to the *Nouvelle Héloïse,* and had already sketched out the first chapters of *Émile*, when, in a house at the corner of the Rue des Écrivains in Paris, a weak and sickly infant announced his advent in the manner of his kind. It was the 12th June, 1760, and the child afterwards answered to the name of Jean Baptiste. He was the youngest son of Louis Louvet, stationer, and of Louise his wife. This frail boy was destined to become, first, the sprightly historian and critic of the gay and decadent society (with all its morbid and intoxicating charm) that moved around the reigning favourite ; and later, one of the boldest and most uncompromising reformers of its abuses.

Louvet *père* is described by Mercier as " an ignorant and brutal shopkeeper," and is referred to by others who knew him in equally uncomplimentary terms.* He was a hard-headed business man, coarse and tyrannical, who, failing to understand the refined and sentimental vein in his son's nature, generally treated him with irritability and contempt. His mother, on the other hand, was of a gentle and sym-

* Mercier, *Nouveau Paris*, ii., p. 473.

pathetic temper, and Jean Baptiste always spoke of her with the greatest veneration. To her he probably owed those remarkable qualities of mind and heart for which he was afterwards famous. He was his mother's favourite. We learn that much of his boyhood was rendered miserable through the systematic persecution of a brother, six years older than himself, although no word of complaint against his tyrant passed his lips. He consoled himself by occasionally giving his brother a good drubbing—the battle being not always to the strong, nor the race to the swift.

During these early years, Jean Baptiste, being of a frail constitution, was sent to bed very early, in his mother's dressing-room, situated on the first floor; whilst his more robust brothers enjoyed themselves in an attic on the fourth storey at the top of the house.

Tired to death of these domestic arrangements, he cast about for a means of escape from his boredom, and being even at that time of an inventive turn, he had soon arranged his plan. Taking advantage of a little roof, almost on a level with the window of his mother's room, he persuaded his brothers to let down a rope from their window, which he grasped firmly in both hands, and at a given signal they hauled him up to the top of the house. At ten o'clock, when they heard the rest of the household preparing to retire for the night, his brothers carefully dropped little Jean on to the roof below, whence he could easily climb into his mother's window.

This sport lasted for several months. One night,

however, in mid-winter, when there had been a snow-storm followed by a hard frost, in attempting to regain his bedroom in the usual way, the boy's naked foot slipped on the frozen snow, and he fell from the roof to the pavement below. He lay there unconscious the whole night long. In the morning he was discovered lying at full length before the front door, covered with snow and ice. It was found that he had broken no bones, and, indeed, appeared to be little the worse for his adventure. With that staunch loyalty and tenacity of purpose so characteristic of his whole life, he refused to explain how the accident had happened; and his mother, who shared his confidence in all else, died without knowing the secret.*

In spite of his father's coldness and the continual bullying of his brother, young Jean Baptiste's boyhood was not wholly devoid of happiness. This he owed chiefly to the kindness of some friends of his parents named Denuelle. The boy spent many a delightful hour in the society of M. Denuelle, a level-headed, well-read man, who soon inspired him with his own enthusiasm for that eighteenth century philosophy which was destined in the fullness of time to set the world on fire. M. Denuelle was one of the first to profess republican opinions, and there is little doubt that he had a profound influence on the impressionable mind of his young friend. It was, however, a still more powerful attraction which drew the boy's steps daily to the Denuelle's house. They had a little daughter, Marguerite, born eight days before himself,

* From notes supplied by Louvet's widow to Riouffe for his *Oraison Funèbre sur Louvet.*

who had been his playmate as long as he could remember, and whom, as long as he could remember, he had passionately loved.* Even at this tender age, Marguerite showed sweetness of temper, combined with a singular firmness of will, and that active, managing disposition which distinguished her throughout her chequered career.

She returned the enterprising Jean Baptiste's affection with a love stronger than death. Some years later he rewarded her devotion by spreading her fame abroad in the land as Lodoïska, the heroine of a long episode in his *Faublas*, whilst his eternal singing of her virtues, her talents, and her charms, more creditable to his affection than to his discretion, ended by making the poor lady slightly ridiculous.

For the present, it is enough that the children were perfectly happy in each other's society, and it never occurred to them that one day they would probably be separated. But when Marguerite was sixteen years old, a Monsieur Cholet, a rich jeweller of the Palais Royal, made a formal proposal to her parents for her hand.

When the news reached her, she told her parents that she was betrothed to Louvet, and begged them with tears in her eyes not to consider the proposal. But whether the offer of the Sieur Cholet was too tempting, or whether they thought Louvet an excellent playmate, but too feckless a youth as a possible husband for their daughter, they turned a deaf ear to her supplications. In spite of her tears and reproaches,

* Vatel, *Charlotte de Corday et les Girondins*, iii., p. 500 *et seq.*

she was forcibly married to a man almost old enough to have been her grandfather.

Louvet, in despair, threw himself into a course of hard reading by way of distraction. It was at this time that he fell completely under the spell of Rousseau and the prophets. Their doctrines, and especially those of Voltaire and the arch-sophist of Geneva, had a deep influence on his life both as a man of letters and as a political leader. From them he learnt that pathetic solicitude for the welfare of the human race, and for the future generations of mankind, which the revolutionary politician thought too vital a matter to be entrusted to an unassisted Providence. The fundamental error which vitiates their whole system of thought is their insistence on the cardinal importance of the rights of man, whilst they practically ignored the duties and services which those rights enjoin. The political consequences of this doctrine may be seen in the ever-growing tendency of the nation to impute the natural results of their own imprudences and errors of judgment to the viciousness of their political institutions; and gradually transformed them from a docile and law-abiding nation into a people whom

"No king could govern, nor no god could please."

The *Contrat Social* and the *Essai sur l'Inégalité parmi les Hommes* taught them to seek for the rights of man and social perfection in the state of nature, and for all virtue and happiness in the breast of the unsophisticated savage. The theory would be ludicrous were it not pernicious. But no amount of

evidence could convince these men of this transparent fallacy.

The works of travellers and explorers, describing the conditions of uncivilized life, which they eagerly read taught them nothing. They resolutely blinded themselves to the obvious fact that no man is born virtuous; he either becomes so or grows from bad to worse.

They pointed to the courtesan as the natural product of civilization. Another fallacy: it is the virtuous woman who is the product of civilization. Such palpable truths, however, interfered with their beautiful theories, and they sought to evade by ignoring them. "Men as they are did not concern them; their business was with men in general, as they ought to be on leaving the hands of Nature"—with the creatures they evolved from their inner consciousness in all the nakedness of metaphysical abstraction. In their conception, "men are all fashioned after one pattern, and society consists of so many human units, all alike equal and independent, contracting together for the first time."* There were more things in this theory than Rousseau dreamed of in his philosophy. This doctrine, corrupting barren and narrow minds incapable of seeing facts behind words, was largely responsible for the power of the rabble during the Reign of Terror. For when an abstract idea, such as the rights of man and popular sovereignty, once takes possession of a mind which has attained to a perfection of moral and intellectual sterility equal to Robespierre's, it will soon drive

* Taine.

out all other ideas and reign there alone. With that arrogance and self-sufficiency peculiar to those who have never experienced a wisdom greater than their own, such men will believe themselves the god-sent types of absolute virtue and incorruptibility. Hence they will accept the wickedness of all who differ from them in their opinions as a self-evident truth ; whilst those who presume to question the propriety of their acts, immediately fall under suspicion of being friends of tyranny, and they will denounce them, in all sincerity, as bad citizens and sworn foes of mankind.

There is little doubt that, had he lived long enough, Rousseau, whose name was ever on the lips of these demagogues, would have died on the scaffold as an anti-revolutionist, for he had said one drop of blood was too dear a price to pay for a revolution ; and it is equally certain Voltaire would have met with the same fate, for having taught that the worst of all governments is mob government.

Louvet also accepted these doctrines ; but his romanticism, and, above all, his sense of humour, saved him from attempting to carry them to their logical conclusion. He did not allow these abstract principles to occupy his mind entirely. He was an artist before he was a philosopher, and his art kept him in touch with his fellows.

Paris was ringing with the news of the insurgent victories in the American War of Independence, and Mirabeau, from his cell at Vincennes, was writing in blood and tears those heartrending letters to Sophie de Monnier, when our hero, seventeen years of age, became secretary to P. F. de Dietrich, the eminent

mineralogist.* It was whilst in this position that he made his *début* as a man of letters, by writing a memoir on a poor servant girl who went out nursing in order to support her mistress and two daughters, when they had been suddenly reduced to penury. This memoir succeeded in obtaining for his client the prize for virtue, which had a few weeks before been instituted by the Baron de Montyon in connection with the Académie Française.

He next engaged himself to Prault, the publisher of much of the light literature of the age. Here his time was not wasted; he mastered every detail connected with the production of books, and perfected himself in his art. He also read for the law, and was admitted *avocat*.

"*Tout notaire a rêvé des sultanes*," wrote Flaubert in *Madame Bovary*. The malady is not peculiar to notaries. No youth with a touch of poetry in him escapes the infection. It is a distemper inseparable from growth. Scanty as is our information on these years, one thing we do know—*il rêvait des sultanes*. The proof is in *Faublas*, the romance he was now ruminating. He was twenty-six years of age, and had already acquired by his industry a small income which enabled him to live in the country. "I had," he says, "laid aside the luxuries dear to youth, and had attained independence by circumscribing my wants. My expenses were limited to 800 livres (about £33) a year."

The first part of the book, entitled *Les Amours du*

* During the Revolution, he became Mayor of Strasbourg, and it was at his house that the *Marseillaise* was first sung.

Chevalier de Faublas, consisting of seven neat little volumes, probably "set up" and printed by the author's own hand, and on sale at his house in the Rue Quincampoix, appeared in the spring of 1786. Its success was immediate. Nor is this to be wondered at, for the public was beginning to be bored to death by the long-drawn sighs of Héloïse, the laborious sentimentality of Mercier, and even by the delicate indelicacies of Crébillon *fils*.

The most cursory examination of the pages of *Faublas* will convince the reader that whatever Louvet may have been by conviction, he was certainly an aristocrat by temperament. One of the most remarkable features of the book is its author's deep and sympathetic insight into the hearts and souls of those elegant gentlemen and dainty ladies who fluttered round the throne, and lightly ransacked heaven and earth for subjects of conversation in the fashionable *salons* of the century. His sympathy is so fundamental and his knowledge so intimate that it seems natural to attribute them to the influence of heredity. If he was the son of the "ignorant and brutal shopkeeper," described by Mercier, how could he have become the inimitable historian of the light-hearted intrigues and intimacies of the boudoir?

Where did he learn that *finesse*, that exquisite tact, that easy self-possession which made the nobility of France under the *ancien régime* the most attractive aristocracy the world has ever seen? Being unable to answer these questions satisfactorily, it has been roundly asserted that our author was of noble descent, though apart from this vague sense of the fitness

of things there is no evidence for the statement. Nor did Louvet himself make any serious claim to a title, for though he signed *Faublas* "Louvet de Couvrai," it seems clear from the address "To my double," affixed to that work, he did so only to avoid confusion with another public man; whilst in later editions of the romance he jokingly refers to "the most impertinent of Revolutions" for robbing him of his title of a day. The address, which bears directly on the subject, runs thus:

"I do not know, sir, if you are the happy possessor of a face like mine, or if, like me, you are descended from that famous Louvet* . . . I do not know, though I can no longer doubt, that we are of about the same age; that we are adorned with almost the same title; and that we glory in an identical name. Above all, I am struck by a point of resemblance more important to us and more interesting to our country; it is that we can march hand in hand to immortality, for we both write very charming prose, and we both readily get ourselves into print.

"I am pleased to think that this perfect analogy seemed at first to you, as it did to me, very flattering; but now I am persuaded that you feel, as I do, the terrible inconvenience that it entails. By what certain sign shall two rivals so closely resembling each other, and entering at the same time on a great

* A reference to President Louvet, minister of State under Charles VII., whose wife (with her *charmes succulents*) plays such an important *rôle* in Voltaire's *Pucelle*. These words appear to me to have been taken too seriously; at least, it may fairly be doubted whether this was not "only his fun," as Lamb said of Coleridge's preaching.

career, be recognized and distinguished? When the world shall ring with our common fame; when our masterpieces, under the same signature, shall travel from pole to pole, who will separate our two names, confounded in the temple of Fame? Who will preserve to me my reputation, which, without the least idea of doing so, you will continually usurp? Who will restore to you your glory, of which, without wishing to do so, I shall continually rob you? Who could be so perspicacious, as by a sufficiently equitable distribution, to render to each the just portion of celebrity which he has merited? What shall I do to prevent them from lending you all my wit? How will you prevent them from gratifying me with all your eloquence? Ah! my dear sir, my dear sir!

"It is true that a thankless fortune has put a difference between us which is wholly to your advantage: you are an advocate *au*,* whilst I am but an advocate *en*,† you have pronounced a great discourse before a great assembly, whilst I have but written a small romance. Now, all orators will allow that it is more difficult to harangue the public, than to write in the study; and all enlightened folk stand aghast at the gulf which separates advocates *en* from advocates *au*. But I would humbly submit that there are thousands of ignorant people in the state, who have never heard either of my romance or of your discourse, and who, in their profound indifference, have not taken the trouble to learn what great privileges are attached to that little word *au*,

* *Avocat au tribunal.* † *Avocat en droit.*

of which, if I were in your place, I should be very proud. Thus, you see, sir, in spite of the romance and the discourse, and the *en* and the *au*, all these good people, who cannot fail to hear of you and I very shortly, will constantly be taking one of us for the other. Ah, my dear sir, I pray you, let us hasten to spare our contemporaries these perpetual misapprehensions, which, moreover, will be so very embarrassing for our nephews.

"I had at first imagined that you, being the more interested party in clearing the doubts of posterity, would follow the custom of your noble colleagues, who, for the greater glory of the Bar, when their ordinary names are become too modest, commonly augment them by the addition of a high-sounding surname. On further reflection, however, I felt that I ought to spare you from such a ridiculous action by taking it upon myself. It was that which decided me. You may, if you see fit to do so, remain simply M. Louvet; for my part I wish ever to be Louvet de Couvrai."*

This little discourse has hitherto been treated as a deliberate mystification on the part of its author. It may have been so. Yet is it not conceivable that Louvet intended the epistle to be taken literally? The surmise is strengthened when we consider that the advocate Pierre Florent Louvet had already won

* It was a common practice in large families for each son to adopt a second name, in this way, to distinguish him from his brothers. Thus, we have Brissot de Warville, who was known to Madame de Genlis only as Monsieur de Warville; Pétion de Villeneuve, and the brothers Rabaut Saint-Étienne and Rabaut-Pomier.

a reputation for eloquence before the meeting of the Constituent Assembly. He afterwards represented the Department of la Somme in the Legislative Assembly and in the National Convention. He was a member of the Plaine—the Trimmers of their day—and on the downfall of the Girondists addressed a letter of protest to the Convention against their proscription. During the Terror, he was sent as a commissioner to interview Madame Roland in the Abbaye Prison, and came off second best. She thought him a pedantic fool, and as good as told him so; but his embarrassment may have arisen from nervousness and a sense of the justice of her cause. He seems to have been an inoffensive creature. His name appears in the trial of Charlotte Corday, and on the document which Robespierre was signing when he was struck down at the Hôtel de Ville.

In the beginning of 1789, Louvet went to live in a country house, six miles from Paris, which a friend had generously placed at his disposal, in order to write the last chapters of the second part of *Faublas*. He was anxious to finish it, for Lodoïska, failing to obtain a divorce, was about to join him and he would shortly have to provide for them both.

"I was at work," he says, "on the *Fin des Amours de Faublas*, and I worked in my own way, that is to say, in absolute solitude, far from all commerce with the world, cut off, as it were, from among the living, delivered over solely to the creatures of my imagination. It is essential to me when at work to abandon myself without distraction of any kind. Should an intruder break the thread of my

thoughts, I have the greatest difficulty to resume my work, and if I am often interrupted, disgust supervenes and my mind becomes paralyzed; but left, on the other hand, to myself, I work with very great rapidity."

The publication of the other six volumes of *Faublas* in 1789, considerably increased Louvet's fortune. The profits would doubtless have been very much greater but for the outbreak of the Revolution, which interfered with the sale of all romances, and gave facilities to the publishers of pirated editions.

The story of Lodoïska, which forms an episode in *Faublas*, was the subject of two operas performed with great success in Paris, the first, composed by Cherubini, being produced at the Théâtre Feydeau on July 18, 1791, and the second by Kreutzer, at the Italiens on August 1, 1791. It was also the subject of a popular melodrama by J. P. Kemble, first performed in June, 1794, at the Drury Lane Theatre. In spite of a song by Tom Moore, it is poor stuff; though rich in humour of the unconscious sort. The climax is terrific. A horde of Tartars (twenty-four to be exact), on real horses, set the castle on fire in which Lodoïska and her lover are confined by her wicked and amorous custodian. Floreski, her lover, snatches her from the blazing battlements, whilst the Tartars, their rescuers, bear off all the other women they find, singing a bold, bad song with the refrain:

> "Worlds of wealth, and worlds of wives,
> Are the hardy TARTARS PRIZE."

CHAPTER II

Les Amours du Chevalier de Faublas.

"WRETCHED cloaca of a book; without depth even as a cloaca! What 'picture of French society' is here? Picture properly of nothing, if not of the mind that gave it out as some sort of a picture. Yet symptom of much; above all, of the world that could nourish itself thereon." Thus spake Carlyle in reference to *Faublas*. In charity, we can only assume that the man who wrote these words had never read the book; in this, indeed, he was no worse than the many others who have cheerfully taken upon themselves to decry this wonderful romance. The criticism has no more relation to fact than the definition propounded to Cuvier by a youthful comparative anatomist, in which a crab was described as a red fish which walks backwards. "Your definition would be perfect," said Cuvier, "but for three facts: a crab is not a fish, it is not red, and it does not walk backwards."

It is strange that the moralist who tolerates without a protest the mephitic sentimentality of his German contemporaries, he who has nought but a smile for the lubricity of a Philina, and boggles at none of the gratuitous coarseness of that dullest of the world's great masterpieces, *Wilhelm Meister*, should stiffen at once into the Calvinistic divine

and profess to be shocked when Louvet lays bare the souls of the men and looks into the hearts of the women he knew so well.

"If I am sometimes too gay," says Louvet in his preface, "forgive me. I have yawned so much over so many romances. I was fearful lest mine should be as soporific as they. Have patience with me for a few years, and I shall perhaps write a duller one, which will be more to your liking. I say perhaps. Yet ought not the romancer to be the faithful historian of his age? Can he paint other than that he has seen? O, you who make such a clatter, change your manners, and I will change my pictures!"

Precisely, *Faublas*, we repeat, is not an immoral book. It has none of that subtle, furtive and leering indecency which debases much of the literature of the eighteenth century; and, after all, it is by the moral standard of the age in which it was written, not by our own, that every work of art should be judged. In short, all that is noble in *Faublas* (and I think you will find a great deal) belongs to Louvet alone, whilst he is not entirely responsible for that which shocks the susceptibilities of his modern readers. It is witty, vivacious, and as free from cant and superfluous fig-leaves as the brilliant society it portrays; but, like that society, it has its serious moments too. There are passages in it worthy of the eloquence of a Burke, and scenes which would draw tears from the eyes of a Robespierre. The women are spirited to the verge of indiscretion, but tactful, warm-hearted and sympathetic; it was their nature to love passionately,

and they glory in their love. Yet they are the true sisters of the beautiful and good Madame de Lamballe, who, on hearing of the Queen's danger, left a safe asylum in England to watch over and comfort her friend, and paid for her devotion by the thousand obscene horrors perpetrated on her murdered body;* or of that Madame Bouquey, who welcomed and protected Louvet and his fellow-outlaws, when all other doors were closed against them, starved herself that they might be fed, and when that was not enough, cheerfully laid down her life for her friends.

And we are made to feel that these pleasure-loving women he describes, in spite of their gaiety, their frivolity, and their recklessness, will also, when their time comes, shrink from no sacrifice for the sake of those they love. Nor are the men unworthy of such women. They are careless epicureans, dissipated it may be, in a genteel way, not overburdened with conscience, perhaps, when things go well with them, as under the *ancien régime ;* but these are the chivalrous gentlemen who, on August 10th, 1789, rushed forward to die for the King on the staircase of the Tuileries ; the lofty patriots who poured out their blood like water in the service of the country which robbed, proscribed, massacred, and led them in flocks to the scaffold.

The romance opens with Faublas' first entry into

* She was then forty-three, but she had been beautiful and she was still good.

Paris by the Faubourg Saint-Marceau, in October, 1783.

"I sought," he says, "that superb city of which I had read such wonderful accounts. I found but high and squalid tenements, long narrow streets, poor wretches everywhere clothed in rags, a crowd of almost naked children; I beheld a dense population and appalling poverty. I asked my father if that was indeed Paris; he answered coldly that it was certainly not the finest quarter; we should have time to see the other on the morrow."

This picture, drawn in a few simple words, bites into the brain of the reader like the burin into the plate of the engraver. It succeeds in bringing pre-revolutionary Paris straight before the eyes, far more directly than many more ambitious descriptions. The contrast between the life he sees to-day and the life into which he enters on the morrow is most effective. A few days after their arrival in the capital, the hero and his father visit the convent in which Faublas' sister Adélaïde is a *pensionnaire*.

"My father was curious to see the bosom friend of his daughter. When the Baron requested Adélaïde to fetch Mademoiselle de Pontis, a kind of presentiment set my heart beating wildly. My sister ran out; she soon returned, leading by the hand . . . imagine Venus at fourteen! I wanted to step forward, to speak, to bow; I remained with fixed eyes, open mouth, and with arms hanging helplessly by my side. My father, perceiving my agitation, was amused. 'Surely you will greet the lady?' said he. This served but to increase my embarrassment.

I made a very awkward bow. 'I assure you, mademoiselle, that this young man has had a master of deportment,' continued the Baron. I was absolutely put out of countenance. . . . Before leaving, my father kissed his daughter and bowed to Mademoiselle de Pontis. In my agitation I bowed to my sister, and was on the point of kissing Sophie. The young lady's governess, preserving more presence of mind than I, advised me of my mistake. The Baron looked at me in astonishment. Sophie coloured slightly, but a smile rippled over her sweet lips."

It must be admitted that Faublas' adventures were not all so innocent. Soon after coming to Paris, he made the acquaintance of the Comte de Rosambert, a handsome young rake, who early initiated him into the elegant iniquities of that polite society, in which " vice itself had lost half its evil by losing all its grossness."

In a spirit of mischievousness, Rosambert persuades Faublas, who is a very pretty boy, to accompany him to a ball dressed as a girl.

" We had no sooner made an appearance in the assembly than all eyes were turned on me. I was troubled ; I felt myself blush ; I lost all countenance. It occurred to me that perhaps some part of my dress was disordered, or that my borrowed habit had betrayed me ; but the general eagerness of the men and the universal discontent of the women soon convinced me that I was well disguised. One looked at me disdainfully, another examined me sulkily ; there was an agitation of fans as they whispered together and exchanged malicious smiles. I saw that

they gave me the welcome which women usually accord to a pretty rival on seeing her for the first time. At this moment a very beautiful woman entered the room; it was the Count's mistress. He introduced me as his relative, who, he said, had just left the convent. The lady (who was the Marquise de B——) received me very kindly. I sat down by her side, and the young men made a circle round us. In order to excite the jealousy of his mistress, the Count affected to treat me with marked preference. The Marquise, apparently nettled by his coquetry, and resolved to punish him, dissimulated the vexation she felt and redoubled her politeness and kindness towards me.

"'Do you like the convent, mademoiselle?' she asked.

"'I should love it, madame, if there were many people like you there.'

"The Marquise smiled in acknowledgment of the compliment. She asked me a great many more questions, seemed delighted with my answers, and overwhelmed me with those little caresses which women lavish on each other. Then, turning to Rosambert, she told him he was really too fortunate in having such a relative, and ended by giving me a tender kiss, which I politely returned. This was more than the Count had bargained for. Taken aback by the vivacity of the Marquise, and, above all, by the goodwill with which I had received her caresses, he whispered in her ear and revealed to her the secret of my disguise. Having looked at me very attentively for a few moments, she cried:

" ' What nonsense! It cannot be!'

" The Count renewed his protestations.

" ' What an idea!' replied the Marquise, lowering her voice. ' Do you know what he says? He has the assurance to tell me that you are a young man in disguise.'

" I replied timidly in a whisper that he spoke the truth.

" The Marquise darted a tender glance at me, pressed my hand, and feigning to have misunderstood my words, she said aloud :

" ' I knew it very well. The story was too preposterous!' Then turning to the Count :

" ' What is the meaning of this pleasantry, monsieur?'

" ' What!' cried Rosambert in his astonishment ; ' does mademoiselle dare to maintain——'

" ' Of course she maintains it! Just look at her, such a sweet child ; the pretty darling!'

" ' Do you mean to tell me!——' again exclaimed the Count.

" ' I pray you have done with this nonsense, monsieur,' returned the Marquise with considerable warmth ; ' either you take me for a fool or you are beside yourself.' "

Such is the beginning of Faublas' *liaison* with the brilliant Madame de B——.

Of all the striking figures in the book the Marquise is the most remarkable. She is the incarnation of those fascinating women, with an extraordinary aptitude for affairs, either of a political or a sentimental nature, who have played such a great part

throughout the history of France. No nation has produced so great a number of eminent women; and in no country have the women had such a direct influence on the march of events. Frenchwomen claim it as their right to have a voice in every matter which affects the welfare of those dear to them.

"Madame," said Napoleon to a lady no less celebrated for her beauty and her wit than for the vivacity of her opinions, "I do not like women to meddle in politics." "You are quite right, General," she replied; "but in a country where they cut off their heads, it is only natural that they should want to know why." The first person openly to express Republican opinions in France was Madame Robert, daughter of the Chevalier Guynement de Kéralio, and that at a time when the terrible *lettre de cachet* was in full force; and when Madame Roland, who was destined to become one of the great Republican martyrs, was still a supporter of the Monarchy.

Madame Robert, according to M. Aulard, must be regarded as the founder of the Republican party. In view of these facts, it is little wonder that, in 1788, a great thinker like Condorcet should draw up a scheme of social and political reform, in which he demanded that women should be eligible to vote at the election of representatives.* Nor is it surprising that under the *ancien régime* women holders of fiefs were admitted to vote in the electoral system of the provincial and municipal assemblies; whilst many a noble or clerical deputy owed his election

* See the present writer's article on "Women's Suffrage and the French Revolution," in *The Academy*, Sept. 7, 1907.

to the States-General to the votes of women.* Moreover, women participated directly in all the events of the Revolution. Some contributed to its success in their *salons*, others in the streets, and yet others at the taking of the Bastille. It was the women who initiated the march on Versailles on the 5th and 6th October, 1789; it was a woman who rid her country of a tyrant in Marat; and it was a woman, Thérèse Cabarrus, who (in her own way, it is true) checked the bloody proscriptions of Tallien at Bordeaux. The Madame de B—— of *Faublas* is just such a woman as these. She has an iron will and a tender heart. She was fashioned for love, and she was fashioned for intrigue. We can imagine her fighting the battles of the century in her drawing-room. She delights in violent action, and yet she is superbly feminine.

From the moment of her meeting with Faublas, her whole life is devoted to scheming for his happiness, but she is determined that he shall owe his happiness to none but her. To attain her object, she sticks at nothing: all means are fair in her eyes. She makes heroic efforts to be generous to Sophie (the daughter of Lodoïska) and Madame de Lignolle, her rivals, but the woman in her triumphs, and she is their implacable enemy throughout; and whenever Faublas attempts to break with her he is met by the insurmountable obstacle of her imperious love.

After reading *Faublas* we feel that the Marquise de B—— is one of the few heroines of romance

* Mirabeau's mother recorded her vote on this occasion.

that we have met in the flesh, so intense is the feeling of reality she creates. Her spell is cast over the reader just as surely as it was cast over Faublas, for she is not a creature of the imagination, but a woman of flesh and blood; and it is as idle for the M. du Portail of the story to exhort the hero to break with her, as it is to attempt to weaken the devotion of the reader by shouting in his ear that she paid too little regard to the proprieties.

As for Faublas himself, he would certainly be an impossible person were it not for one fact. In spite of his wildness and the thousand and one follies of which he is guilty, the quest of sensation without love, of pleasure for pleasure's sake, which is the essential characteristic of the vicious man, is foreign to his nature. This is his saving grace; therein lay the charm he has for us, and we readily forgive him everything. He is a rake, but his rakishness has not corrupted his heart. His conduct may be open to improvement, but his sentiments are beyond reproach. The clean-hearted and tender Sophie never ceases to hold his heart in her little white hand.

With her modesty and almost childish candour, she remains for him the incarnation of that assured and enduring domestic happiness, which for him is a paradise lost. When his good intentions fall victims to an over-ardent temperament, as they very often do, he returns to her in a passion of remorse. Sophie, on her part, never fails to greet him with a welcoming smile on her lips and forgiveness in her eyes, and Faublas, with characteristic buoyancy, takes this as

a sign that he has reached at least one stage on the road to the paradise regained.

As there are some men, so are there some books superior to their reputations. *Faublas* is such a book. Beyond the mad frolics of a particularly inflammable hero, beyond the profoundly scientific capitulations of the Marquise de B——, and the disingenuous indiscretions of the sprightly little Comtesse de Lignolle, there is a very definite moral to be drawn. Louvet, unconsciously it may be, makes his characters suffer the logical consequences, both moral and physical, of their misconduct; and a book which its author has strangely enough described as "frivolous" ends in a poignant tragedy.

Considered as a whole, the most prejudiced reader must admit that the characters in the romance compare very favourably with their contemporaries in real life. Few would be prepared to maintain that the hero and heroines of *Faublas* are not on an infinitely higher moral plane than the average courtier or leader of society under the Regency. Compared with Madame de Boufflers or Madame de Parabère, the Marquise de B—— is almost a vestal; and if it be objected that the essential quality of a vestal is absolute and admits of no modification, even in the case of such a charming creature as the Marquise, we would urge that her past left so very little trace on her future that the matter is scarcely worth arguing about. As for Faublas, his naughtiest adventure is innocence itself compared with the cold-blooded depravities of a La Fare or a Richelieu, not to mention the unspeakable De Sade.

LOUVET

With its laughing philosophy and easy self-possession, its exquisite tact, delicacy of feeling and scintillating wit, *Faublas* is the epic of the *ancien régime*, the masterly epitome of that careless, gallant and accommodating society which was so soon to perish under the blade of the guillotine.

CHAPTER III

Louvet returns to Paris—Lodoïska again—Nemours—The sex question during the Revolution—The teaching of the *philosophes*, and its results—Louvet dons the tricolour—The King's veto—"An infamous orgy"—Louvet is called out—The insurrection of the 5-6 October, 1789—Louvet and Lodoïska seek to win over the soldiers—Louvet begins his political career—*Paris justifié*—The Jacobins.

HIS task over, Louvet quitted his solitary retreat and returned to Paris. Ignorant of all that had happened during the past months, he stepped, as it were, into a new world. The France of a year ago had passed away for ever: a new era had dawned. The States-General had been in session for six weeks.

"Full of civic curiosity," he says, "I set out for Versailles. It was the 14th or 15th of June (1789) when I entered the hall. Target was speaking. As everybody knows, Target was not the most eloquent of the Commons, but he was a man of some feeling, and at that time showed courage, and this was the first time I had heard the rights of the people spoken of publicly. My soul was stirred to the depths. I returned preoccupied with the thought that since I could serve the popular cause in no other way, I ought to undertake the publication of a journal.

"But if the love of the Revolution blazed up suddenly in my heart, another and an older love burnt there none the less ardently. Ah! if I could but write the story of my youth! You would then

know something of *her*, that rare woman, endowed with every quality of mind, heart and soul; and I should deem myself unworthy of her love if I failed to make you adore her too."

That was perhaps too much to expect, but clearly our friend was badly smitten, for this was set down four years later.

"Her name," he proceeds, "might now be mentioned without compromising her, for she is my wife; but I will still conceal it lest our enemies should wreak their cowardly vengeance on her unoffending relatives. I will, therefore, give her the name of the generous daughter of one Republican and the worthy wife of another, whose characters I have drawn in the (Polish) episode of my first romance. Who could have guessed, when in 1786 I described the perils and adventures of the unhappy Pulawski, that soon my own destiny would bear such a striking resemblance to his; or that my dear lady, whose only ornaments then seemed the tender graces and virtues of her sex, would display all the high courage and firmness in the face of danger and difficulty with which I had endowed the wife of Lowzinski? To think that it was to be her fate to suffer all the misfortunes my brain had invented for Lodoïska. By that name, then, I shall in future distinguish her."

For five months Louvet had been deprived of the happiness of seeing Lodoïska. As soon, therefore, as he had made arrangements for the publication of his new volumes, he left everything and flew to her. She was living at Nemours, rather more than fifty miles from Paris.

"Of all noble sweeps of roadway," wrote Robert Louis Stevenson in an essay on Fontainebleau, "none is nobler, on a windy dusk, than the high road to Nemours, between its lines of talking poplar." The place held his imagination, for he returns to the subject in a letter to his mother in 1875.

"Nemours," he says, "is a beautiful little town, watered by a great canal and a little river. The river is crossed by an infinity of little bridges, and the houses have courts and gardens, and come down in stairs to the very brim; and washerwomen sit everywhere in curious little penthouses and sheds. A sort of reminiscence of Amsterdam. The old castle turned now into a ball-room and cheap theatre; the seats of the pit are covered with old Gobelins tapestry; one can still see heads in helmets. In the actors' dressing-rooms are curious Henry Fourth looking-glasses. On the other hand, the old manacles are kept laid by in a box, with a lot of flower-pots on the top of it, in a room with four canary birds." *

In a cottage on the outskirts of this romantic town Louvet passed the next few months—the happiest of his life—treading "the primrose path of dalliance" with the woman he loved by his side. Yet it must often have filled him with bitterness to think that she was the wife of another, for he was essentially "a marrying man," and his whole ambition was centred in the simple pleasures of domestic life.

Although the moralist will condemn him, there

* See Balfour (Graham,) *Life of Robert Louis Stevenson*, vol. i., p. 133.

were in his case circumstances which might fairly be urged in extenuation of his conduct. Only those whose virtue has triumphed over equally sore temptation are in a position to cast stones at him; and these would be the last to condemn, for "to know all is to pardon all." Moreover, the bonds of matrimony sat lightly upon the men and women of that age.

To them love was its own justification, and they regarded all ties which prevented them from following the dictates of their hearts as unnatural, and refused to be bound by them. The characteristic attitude of the time, in regard to the institution of marriage, is summed up in Chamfort's comedy, in which Belton, a wandering Englishman, wrecked on a savage island, encounters Betty, an attractive and unsophisticated young lady, who falls in love with him at first sight and takes him to her father's cave, finally going away with him. The innocence of the lovers is saved, at a critical juncture, by the arrival of a benevolent Quaker, who provides a dowry, but insists on formally marrying them, much to the astonishment of Betty, who exclaims, "What! can I not love thee without this man in a black gown?"

Yet examples might be multiplied of the most admirable constancy in extra-conjugal attachments such as that between Louvet and Madame Cholet. The mutual fidelity of the Chevalier de Boufflers and Madame de Sabran triumphed over periodical separations of many months' duration; and the emotional Madame d'Houdetot (the original of

Héloïse) remained to the end faithful to the absent Saint-Lambert, in spite of the gins and pitfalls that Rousseau set about her feet.

Nor should it be overlooked that the whole tendency of the age was towards a loosening of the marriage tie. The *philosophes* and *encyclopédistes*, from Helvétius to Rousseau, and from Voltaire to Condorcet, all treated morality as a purely social question, and taught that our conduct is virtuous or vicious only in so far as it is useful or prejudicial to the welfare of the state. During the Revolution, this theory was carried into practice in the law of September, 1792, wherein marriage was treated as an ordinary civil contract, and its tie deliberately rendered loose and precarious, approximating as nearly as possible to the free and transient union of the sexes. The law further granted a dissolution of marriage on the demand of both, or even of one of the parties, after one month of formal probation; or if it could be proved that a couple had lived separate for six months, the divorce might be pronounced without any delay whatever. Illegitimacy was abolished, children born out of wedlock being accorded the same rights as legitimate children.

During the first two and a quarter years following the promulgation of this law, the courts of Paris granted 5,994 divorces; and in the sixth year of the Republic the number of divorces was in excess of the marriages.*

While these facts do not exonerate Louvet from

* Taine.

blame, they go far to show that the particular delinquency of which he was guilty was regarded as of quite a venial nature, and was accepted by his contemporaries with an indulgent equanimity.

From time to time rumours of tumult and sedition in Paris, the first low murmurs of the coming storm, reached him in his retreat, but during the last few weeks the horizon seemed to have cleared. Then like a thunderbolt came the news that the Parisians had suddenly revolted and taken the Bastille by assault. Louvet and his companion were almost delirious with joy. Lodoïska ransacked her work-basket, cut out three strips of ribbon—red, white and blue—and within a few moments her deft fingers had fashioned a tricoloured cockade, the badge of the popular party. Kneeling at her feet, Louvet received the emblem at her hands, with all the fervour of a Crusader setting out on another holy war.

On being assured that Paris was completely victorious, and had nothing to fear from the intrigues of the Court, Louvet prolonged his stay at Nemours, having for the present abandoned his idea of founding a popular journal.

After the fall of the Bastille had convinced the Royalist party of the futility of any attempt to win back by force the power they had lost, they hoped to do so by means of a majority in the Constituent Assembly. To this end Mirabeau, Cazalès, Maury, Malouet and others brought in a bill by which no law could be passed by the Assembly without the King's sanction. This measure was violently opposed

by the leaders of the popular party, the most prominent members of which were Barnave, the three brothers Lameth (founders of the Jacobin Club), Pétion, Robespierre, Talleyrand and Sieyès, who wished to make of the King a mere functionary of State, the passive and obedient agent of a government which would be Republican in all but name. Between these two parties were Necker and his clique, who sought to win the confidence of all by allowing the right of a suspensive veto to the King, by which he should have power to suspend any measure of which he did not approve, for a definite number of years. It is difficult to conceive how any sane man could have supported such a measure, which would have made government practically impossible.

Such was the state of politics when Louvet returned to Paris towards the end of September. He at once threw himself into the fray, and in the debates at the assemblies of the municipal section to which he belonged, he soon made a name for himself as an orator of great promise. In October, the Court party, anticipating further disturbances, and fearing for the safety of the Royal Family, summoned the regiment of Flanders to Versailles. They had no sooner arrived than they were half won over by the populace. In their extremity the King and Queen resolved to seduce the regiment by caresses.

A magnificent banquet was organized in the Court Theatre, and invitations were addressed to all the troops of the King's household. At the height of the banquet, remembering the happy effect of her mother Maria Teresa's beauty and courage on her

Hungarian soldiers, the Queen appeared in their midst, accompanied by the King, and bearing the little Dauphin in her arms. They were greeted with a thunder of applause, and a thousand swords leaping from their scabbards testified to the passionate devotion of the soldiers. The tricoloured cockade was trampled underfoot, and the white cockade, the emblem of the Royal house, was donned with acclamation.

At the same moment the bands of the Guards and the regiment of Flanders struck up the plaintive air of "Ô Richard! ô mon roi!" from Sedaine's opera of *Richard Cœur de Lion*, which had met with a prodigious success on its appearance in 1784, and had maintained its popularity ever since. The story on which the opera is founded tells how Richard the Lionhearted, on his way home from the Crusades, was shipwrecked in the Adriatic, and whilst making his way in disguise through the territory of his enemy, Leopold Duke of Austria, was recognized, arrested, and handed over to the Emperor Henry VI., who imprisoned him in the Castle of Durrenstein. The play reaches its climax when Blondel, Richard's faithful troubadour, who had followed him in his wanderings, discovers the King by singing this song outside the prison in which he is confined. On the outbreak of the Revolution the analogy between Richard's situation and that of Louis XVI., the ardent loyalty which characterizes the whole opera, and is, as it were, epitomized in this pathetic song, caused it to become the recognized chant of the Royalists:

Ô Richard! ô mon roi !
L'univers t'abandonne ;
Sur la terre il n'est donc que moi
Qui s'intéresse à ta personne!

Moi seul dans l'univers
Voudrais briser tes fers,
Et tout le monde t'abandonne.
Ô Richard ! ô mon roi
L'univers t'abandonne,
Et sur la terre il n'est que moi
Qui s'intéresse à ta personne."

It is easy to imagine the frenzy of loyalty with which the gallant soldiers, heated as they were with wine, received the famous air, which for five years had haunted their ears ; whilst the belief that they saw the young and beautiful daughter of a hundred kings, in her peril, turning to them as the only refuge for herself and those dear to her, served but to increase their devotion.

Unhappily, the effect of the banquet on the people was disastrous for the Royal Family. They saw in it a carefully organized plot against their newly-won freedom, and a convincing proof of the King's perfidy. Seized with fury and terror, Paris showed her teeth.

The night of the banquet Louvet had taken Lodoïska to visit Madame Salle, a mutual friend, the wife of the future Girondist leader. The Salle's house was a well-known *rendezvous* of Revolutionary enthusiasts, and this " infamous orgy " was the all-absorbing topic of conversation among the guests. Several Deputies were present, and the " scandalous turpitude " of the Court party was denounced with

unmeasured vehemence. Presently a young officer of the Royal Body Guards, the nephew of the hostess, who had come straight from the *fête*, entered the room. He spoke enthusiastically of the banquet and of the display of loyalty it had evoked, and went on to sneer at the Revolution, and to utter imprecations and menaces against Paris. The Deputies were reduced to silence, and the only person to summon sufficient courage to remonstrate with him was the lady who, as Louvet puts it, " had the misfortune to be his aunt."

When the young man had finished what he had to say, Louvet, who had till now watched the scene with some amusement, quietly turned to him, and in his most courtly manner told him he was a cowardly slave. The two men quietly exchanged cards, and Louvet turned towards the door, in order to settle the difference of opinion forthwith, when he was arrested by a look from Madame Cholet, which recalled him to his duty and his principles. He had always ridiculed the practice of duelling as a relic of barbarism, which only a year before had (it was rumoured) cost France the life of Suffren, her greatest admiral.

" No, no, sir," said he ; " we have tolled the knell of all such prejudices ; the age of duelling is past. Besides, since when have you nobles esteemed persons of my condition sufficiently to challenge one of them to single combat ? You men of the sword, of the cloth and of the robe, have too long united to oppress the people, who could not defend themselves because you had the art of spreading division among them.

To-day, it is our turn, to-day it is the people who by their masses are going to crush the gentlemen. I might then by a just retaliation make use of this superiority of numbers. I have no wish, however, to take this advantage, but I will reserve to myself the right of choosing the time and the place of the combat. You Body Guards," added he, as if inspired by a premonition, " you Body Guards ask for civil war. You shall have it. You call us Parisians out : we Parisians will come. On that day, sir, show yourself before your squadron if you dare, and I will step out from our ranks to meet you : I give you a *rendezvous* between the two armies before the gates of the Château."

On the morrow, the 5th of October, as if in fulfilment of Louvet's prophecy, the Parisians marched on Versailles, but he called on his enemy in vain.

This march, one of the most impressive scenes in the whole history of the Revolution, was undertaken on the initiative of the women of Paris, who joined the procession in thousands. The story of the banquet had spread panic among them, and they imagined it was the first step in a deliberate scheme to reduce the capital by famine ; for, as Rivarol truly said, " the people is a sovereign who demands only that he may eat : so long as he is digesting his majesty is quiet." The terrible scarcity of food gave colour to the wild rumours which were sedulously spread abroad by unscrupulous demagogues, who, to serve their own ends, endeavoured to sow distrust and hatred between the King and his subjects. " Bread ! give us bread that our children may live ! " cried the

famished mothers in despair; and it was resolved to go to Versailles, and to demand bread of the King, whom they still looked upon as the father of his people. Led by the conquerors of the Bastille, the women were armed with improvised spears, loaded sticks, pistols, hatchets, muskets—anything, in fact, they could lay their hands on. Most of them were in hideous rags, whilst others, women of the town, were dressed in the latest and most elegant fashions, or in gala costumes taken from theatrical wardrobes. They danced by the side of the cannon, singing the revolutionary songs, which were soon to become famous. Others sat astride the guns, or sprawled over the ammunition wagons. All whom they met on the way were swept forward by the tide, and forced to join the procession. At the head of the women rode the famous Théroigne de Méricourt, skilfully managing a spirited war-horse, borrowed from the Marquis de Saint Huruge, a recusant nobleman, who shared her friendship with a comparatively large percentage of his peers. She wore a steel helmet, ornamented with a long plume, which swept over her naked shoulders. Her muscular arm wielded a spear, and she gave orders in a sharp military tone of voice. With her superb figure and fearless blue eyes, she looked like Penthesilea leading her Amazons into battle.

On reaching Versailles, the women soon succeeded in winning over the regiment of Flanders, whilst several companies of dragoons and chasseurs dispersed to fraternize with the people, and join them in menacing the loyal regiments.

Louvet and Lodoïska were walking by the gates of the Château, when they narrowly escaped being run down by a squadron of cavalry in a charge on the Parisian advanced guard. They passed continually along the ranks of the regiment of Flanders, beseeching the soldiers not to fire on their brothers. The arguments of a number of beautiful courtesans, specially enrolled for the purpose, proved even more convincing, and this corps, too, were soon fraternizing with the people. Louvet and his friend continued their efforts until they found themselves exposed to a heavy fire.

Shortly before daybreak the people, who had encamped before the Château, finding that the palace was badly guarded, owing to the neglect of Lafayette, forced their way within the walls, and after murdering the two guards who opposed them, rushed in dense masses up the great staircase, uttering threats of vengeance against the Queen, who had incurred their enmity. A handful of Gentlemen of the Guard, setting their backs to the door of the Queen's apartment, purchased with their lives the few moments necessary for her escape. Their bodies were one by one hacked to pieces. At this juncture Lafayette arrived on the scene, and sought to retrieve his fault by quelling the insurrection, which he knew it was his duty to have prevented. Taking advantage of his immense popularity with the masses, he at length succeeded in restoring peace. The Royal Family was conducted by the people to Paris, and from this time forward the King was practically a prisoner in his Palace of the Tuileries.

A few weeks later Mounier, President of the States of Dauphiné, and one of the leading moderates in the Assembly, published a manifesto, protesting against the disorders of the 5th and 6th of October.

This provided Louvet with an opportunity of displaying his powers as a controversialist, which he was not slow to seize. His reply, entitled *Paris justifié*, at once brought him to the front as a politician, and gained him admittance to the Society of Jacobins (so-called from the convent where its meetings were held), which had just been founded in Paris. The object of this society was to familiarize the people with Revolutionary ideas, both by the dissemination of literature and by the establishment of similar associations in every corner of the kingdom. Above all, it was formed to counteract the influence of the Royalist and Clerical majority in the Assembly. It was an open confederation of the friends of the people against the half-concealed or suspected conspiracies of the aristocracy. The Jacobins formed, as it were, an army of vigilance, which gradually spread itself over the whole country. They were the Jesuits of the Revolution.

The majority of its members belonged to the middle classes, who had long been waging secret warfare against those of the upper ranks: the barrister against the magistrate, who treated him with contumely; the ambitious solicitor or surgeon envious of the social position of the barrister; the half-starved priest against the luxurious prelate; and the rich merchant or shopkeeper resenting the haughtiness and

exclusiveness of the impoverished noble.* Indeed, from their first appearance, this class has been responsible for most of the great social upheavals. The reason for this is not far to seek. An aristocracy has all to lose and nothing to gain by a change in the established order of things; whilst the energy of the poor is wholly taken up by the daily struggle for existence. The middle classes alone stand to benefit by revolutions; and if they can succeed in dazzling the populace by throwing a specious light on the advantages of change, other things being equal, it is not difficult for them to attain power. This is precisely what happened in the French Revolution. Apart from a small band of idealists, who were responsible for all that was best in the Revolution, it was largely the work of noisy, ambitious, and, with few exceptions, commonplace demagogues, backed by a swarm of briefless barristers, tavern loafers, and hungry irresponsible journalists, drunk with vanity, jealousy and egotism.

Speaking of the Revolution, a lady once remarked in the presence of Delille: "All must recognize in it the hand of God." "And of man," added Delille.

At first, the Jacobins were not opposed to the monarchy as such; they merely agitated for an amended constitution; but they were tired of "the absolute monarchy tempered by epigrams" of the *ancien régime*, and were determined to have a more popular form of government. It was only when they despaired of persuading the King to take this momentous step that they adopted a frankly anti-

* Michelet.

monarchical policy. Thenceforward, each day saw the growth of this wonderful political organization, which after the fall of the monarchy, and under the ascendancy of Robespierre, practically usurped the supreme power in the State.

In the early days of the Society, its membership was strictly limited to Deputies of the popular party in the Assembly, and to authors or orators who had distinguished themselves in the service of the Revolution.

Persuaded that his country had many cleverer defenders in the tribune than himself, Louvet seldom spoke at the meetings of the Jacobins; but it was soon found that he shrank from none of those obscure and onerous duties incidental to the working of a great society, which few were found willing to undertake. His leisure he devoted to his friends, and to the literary pursuits dear to him. Unhappily he felt it his duty to enlist his art as a story-teller into the service of his political opinions. But Art is a jealous mistress, and will not tolerate a divided allegiance.

CHAPTER IV.

Émilie de Varmont—Robespierre's joke—Louvet as a dramatist—His wit—The quarrel between King and Legislature—The Flight to Varennes—Marat's foresight—The Revolution in the Provinces—The first French Republic—A King's business—Louis' double-dealing—He takes the oath—End of the first phase of the Revolution.

IT will be remembered that in his preface to *Faublas* Louvet comforts those critics who found fault with his romance on the grounds of its gaiety, by saying that in a few years' time he might perhaps "write a duller one which would please them better." In 1790 he published *Émilie de Varmont, ou le Divorce Nécessaire; et les Amours du Curé Sévin;* and the first part of his prophecy was fulfilled. The work is in three small volumes uniform with *Faublas*, and although from the artistic point of view it will not bear comparison with that incomparable romance, it was, nevertheless, eminently successful, and the refrain of the unhappy curé's conversation, "On devrait bien marier les prêtres," became a popular catch phrase of the streets of Paris.

As its title announces, this romance, which is in epistolary form, is a plea for more liberal views and a greater facility of divorce. The fact that Madame Cholet had for years past vainly sought a legal separation from her husband in order to marry Louvet had probably not a little to do with his choice of a

subject; and although this personal element was calculated to lessen neither the force of his eloquence nor the cogency of his reasoning, the story must be acknowledged a failure. Yet, it was not without trouble that the author pleases us less: there is abundant evidence of careful workmanship.

The secondary object of the book was to show the necessity for the marriage of priests. It is significant that on the 30th of May of the same year, 1790, Robespierre formally moved the adoption of this measure in the Assembly; and there is little doubt that this fact was mainly responsible for his popularity among the clergy. Thousands of priests wrote from every corner of France, expressing their warmest gratitude to him for bringing forward this question. He received reams of poems in his praise, ranging from five hundred to fifteen hundred verses, not only in French, but in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. "It is said there are no longer any poets," he remarked to a friend with whom he was dining, "but you see that I can make some." But a joke on Robespierre's lips was no laughing matter.

It is more than probable that Robespierre owed the conception of this bill to Louvet, such a sensible measure would scarcely have occurred to his arid mind. Moreover, Madame Roland has related that it was his constant practice, in whatever society he found himself, to listen attentively to the opinions of others, rarely to give his own, and on the morrow to echo in the tribune all that his friends had said the evening before. Literary vanity, as M. Taine acutely remarked, was a dominant trait of his

character, and it may be that this fact partly accounts for the bitter hatred he conceived for the brilliant author of *Faublas*.

In the following year Louvet wrote a satirical comedy on the emigrant nobility and clergy gathered at Coblenz, which succeeded in keeping the boards for twenty-five nights at the Théâtre de Molière; this was entitled *La Grande Revue des Armées Noire et Blanche*. Another play, *L'Anobli conspirateur, ou le Bourgeois Gentilhomme du XVIIIe siècle*, threw ridicule on the nobility in general, and the younger Mirabeau—nicknamed Tonneau, because he was said to resemble a hogshead, both in shape and contents—and the Abbé Maury, the celebrated Royalist orator, in particular. Louvet finished the play just six weeks before the passing of the decree which abolished titles of nobility. Taking his work to the Théâtre Français, it was provisionally accepted, and a day was appointed for the reading. The dramatist had not read far before he noticed unmistakable signs of uneasiness on the faces of the two managers. At length one of them rose to shut all the doors. Louvet had scarcely begun the fourth act when the fidgetiness of his hearers became even more noticeable. At length one of the managers, named Dorfeuille, could contain himself no longer, and exclaimed:

"To play this piece, sir, we should need a battery of cannon at our backs."

This rebuff very naturally caused Louvet to suspect Dorfeuille's patriotism. He made inquiries, and found the manager to be in receipt of a civil list pension, which he held on condition of producing only

such plays as met with the approval of the Court party; whilst, in 1793, adds Louvet, this Royalist pensioner was suddenly transformed into a furious Jacobin. That these charges were not unfounded is proved by the fact that when Louvet wrote, as quoted above, this same Dorfeuille presided over the Revolutionary Commission at Lyons, which daily massacred so many of its inhabitants that the city reeked like a slaughter-house, and the gutters ran red with blood.*

Louvet was equally unsuccessful with his "*L'Élection et l'audience du Grand Lama Sispi* (Pie Six)," a wild extravaganza on the Court of Rome and the political situation generally, which tells how a Chinese vagabond, arriving in Tibet at the moment when the death of the Grand Lama is announced, is found to bear such a strong resemblance to the deceased pontiff, that he is elected his successor. Soon after his installation, a number of Europeans reach his court to solicit his maledictions against the Third Estate of France. Among these emigrants Sispi recognizes Mirabeau, Calonne, and the Queen's favourite, the Duchesse de Polignac. They complain bitterly of the changes which have lately taken place in their country, and fully expect to have his sym-

* In his *Prisons de Lyons*, Delandine relates an anecdote (in connection with Dorfeuille's presidency at the trial of Mâthon-de-la-Cour, a philanthropist and man of letters, which clearly shows what manner of man he was. "You are a noble," said Dorfeuille, when the prisoner was brought before him; "you did not leave Lyons during the siege; read the decree; you can pronounce your own doom." Like the Athenian Lysias, when he cried, "It is not I, Erastothenes, it is the law that condemns thee," he sought to wash his hands of the death of a just man.

pathy. At first, however, Sispi finds these changes excellent in every way; but when they explain to him how much he loses by them, he becomes even more indignant than they are. The play is brilliantly witty, and the quips at royalty and other topical allusions are hardy in the extreme. Under the circumstances, it was considered too strong food for the times, and the author himself was not surprised to find no manager willing to incur the risk of performing it.

The grave posture of affairs in July, 1790, caused Louvet to abandon his career as a dramatist in order to devote all his energies to the service of his party. On the twelfth of that month the Assembly decreed the civil constitution of the clergy. This measure did more than anything else to embitter the quarrel between the King and the Legislature, and it was only after a month's painful struggle—and even then with certain mental reservations—that he could be induced to give his assent to an edict in every way opposed to his conscience and to his religious convictions. As Voltaire's *Homme à Quarante écus* remarked: "It so often happens that one is at a loss for a reply to an argument, and yet is not convinced." It was thus with Louis XVI. when he perceived that it was the intention of the Assembly to kill the monarchy by a policy of pin-pricks. Little wonder that he took to those tortuous ways and secret negotiations with his Austrian brother-in-law, which were destined to ruin him. He determined to fly from a situation which was fast becoming intolerable. His design was to make a dash for the army of the Marquis de Bouillé, which awaited him on

the Belgian frontier, and whilst the Austrians made a diversion by suddenly mobilizing, to march on Paris with all the loyal regiments he could muster.

It was not until the late spring of 1791 that he found an opportunity of putting his plan into execution. On the night of the 20th to 21st of June the Royal Family fled in disguise from the Tuileries. The King left behind him a Proclamation in which he recapitulated all his grievances, and withdrew his consent to all the measures forced upon him since the return from Versailles. The news of the King's flight spread like wildfire, and struck terror into the hearts of all members of the community. The people felt themselves betrayed, and the leaders of the factions found it an easy matter to convince them that Louis was actively plotting to restore the despotism of the *ancien régime* by the aid of foreign arms. The entire French nation had one of those periodical attacks of "nerves" to which they are so peculiarly liable. The journals set up a howl of fury. The King's evasion was a direct attack on the liberty of his subjects; it was nothing less than a crime. As a matter of fact, it was "worse than a crime, it was a blunder," for it was unsuccessful; and from that day the monarchy in France was past praying for.

During this crisis one man showed remarkable political foresight, and that man was Marat. He alone perceived that since the King had abandoned the State, the only means of averting anarchy was to appoint a military dictator. In his *Ami du Peuple* of the 22nd June he earnestly exhorted the

people to accept this means of salvation, the only one remaining to them. "If you refuse to take my advice in this matter," said he, "your blood be on your own heads. I leave you to your fate, for my labour has been in vain." Marat's good sense on this occasion leads inevitably to the conclusion that at this time he was something more than the homicidal maniac he afterwards became.

The alarm, however, was soon dispelled by the news that the Royal Family had been recognized and arrested at Varennes. Pétion, Barnave and Latour-Maubourg were at once deputed to escort them back to Paris. They re-entered the capital by the Faubourg Saint-Antoine on the 25th of June.

From this time the provinces began to play an important part in the drama of the Revolution. Hitherto the provincials had remained indifferent to, or even ignorant of, the gravest events in Paris. At Clermont, wrote Arthur Young, "I dined or supped five times at the table d'hôte, with from twenty to thirty merchants, tradesmen, officers, etc., and it is not easy to express the insignificance, the inanity of their conversation. Scarcely any politics at a moment when every bosom ought to beat with none but political sensations. The ignorance or the stupidity of these people must be absolutely incredible; not a week passes without their country abounding with events that are analyzed and debated by the carpenters and blacksmiths of England." When he asked their opinion on the affairs of the country, they replied: "We are of the provinces, and must wait to know what is going on in Paris."

This moral and intellectual stagnation of the provincials made them the easy dupes of the Jacobin emissaries, who soon began to infest the country; whilst their entire lack of initiative accounts for their tame submission to the domination of the capital during the Reign of Terror.

So far as anything was capable of arousing the provincials to take a languid interest in the political situation, it was the news of the King's flight; indeed, this was one of the few events of the first phase of the Revolution which stirred the whole nation to its depths.

The immediate result of the flight was the decree by which the Assembly suspended the King from his office until he had accepted the Constitution, and for three months France was a republic. During this time it was triumphantly demonstrated that the people were at least no worse off under this form of government than they had been under the monarchy. It was the opportunity for which the few men who at that time professed Republican opinions had been waiting, and they used it to good advantage. But the most convincing arguments against the monarchy were the actions of the King himself; and if the eloquence of Brissot and Camille Desmoulins converted their thousands, the subterfuges of the King converted their tens of thousands.

There were two courses open to Louis at this juncture: to fight or to abdicate. He had not sufficient decision of character to take the first, and it is probable that the Queen dissuaded him from the second. Louis submitted to everything. On

September 14th he solemnly swore to maintain and defend the Constitution, whilst in his heart he nourished the hope of soon being in a position to trample it underfoot. Yet it is scarcely surprising that the King should have displayed little enthusiasm for the principles of the Revolution; he might reasonably have exclaimed with his brother-in-law, the Emperor Joseph II., "*C'est mon métier, à moi, d'être royaliste.*"

So long as it seemed possible to regard the King as the head of the Revolution, anti-monarchical opinions were repugnant to the vast majority of the nation, and the few men who consistently preached Republican doctrines were looked upon as cranks.* But when Louis was openly convicted of double-dealing, people began to question the utility of hereditary monarchy, and when once this spirit of inquiry got abroad in the land, it was an easy step to the conclusion that the monarch was nothing more than "a stick in the wheel." And since the Assembly had deliberately reduced the executive power to a mockery, and not only denied the King all respect, but even the amount of personal liberty enjoyed by the meanest of his subjects, the conclusion was a perfectly just one. "When sovereignty," says Taine, "becomes transformed into a sinecure, it becomes burdensome without being useful, and on becoming burdensome without being useful, it is overthrown."

* It is interesting to note that both Marat and Robespierre were ardent Royalists as late as the summer of 1791; and when the question of establishing a republic was mooted in the *salon* of Madame Roland, Robespierre asked with a sneer, "What is a republic?"

LOUVET

The ceremony of the King's oath to the new Constitution took place on September 14th, 1791, and all moderate men breathed a sigh of relief, believing and hoping that, since all they had fought for was won, the Revolution had now run its course, and things would speedily settle down to the entire satisfaction of all parties. But they reckoned without the Jacobins.

CHAPTER V

Robespierre's cunning—First meeting of the Legislative Assembly —The Parties—Brissot—Vergniaud—Rise of the Girondists—Louvet is convinced of the King's duplicity—He discusses his plans with Lodoïska—Her fears—Louvet is elected to serve on the Jacobins' Committee of Correspondence—His colleagues.

SHORTLY before the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly it had decreed, on the motion of Robespierre, that none of its members should be eligible for a seat in the next legislature. It is difficult to conceive what could have persuaded the Assembly to sanction a measure which delivered their successors, as it were, bound into the hands of the Jacobins. This was, perhaps, the most cunning of all the cunning moves which Robespierre made in the game he was playing. By this means he not only eliminated from active politics the many able royalists who had opposed him in the House, but ensured the election of a large number of the nominees of the Jacobins, who at this time began to regard him as their chief. Every possible means, legal or illegal, was resorted to by the Society to influence the elections. Voters were openly threatened, and the secrecy of the ballot was shamelessly violated.

When the Legislative Assembly met on October 1st, there were already three distinct parties. On the right sat a small number of royalists side by side with the Feuillants, composed of those who favoured a

constitutional government, and thought the Revolution had now gone far enough. These were led from without by Barnave, Duport, and the Lameths, who had recently quitted the Jacobin Club to found that of the Feuillants.

In the centre sat an actual majority of the House, composed for the most part of men who had no definite policy, silent working members, whose votes were generally reserved for the predominant party, whichever that party might be.

On the left sat the extremists, whose policy was largely directed by Robespierre, Danton, and Marat, from without. Among them sat the group of deputies who were soon to break away from the Jacobins on the question of the war with Austria, although at first there was no perceptible difference of opinion between all the members of the Left. Before many weeks had passed, however, these men came to be known as Brissotins, after the most important member of the group, Jean Pierre Brissot, an enlightened publicist and able journalist, well-known as the editor of the *Patriote Français*, a journal of pronounced republican views.

Brissot's career had been a strange one. The thirteenth child of a small innkeeper at Chartres, he had as a youth come to Paris to enter an attorney's office, in which position Robespierre preceded him. When still very young, he formulated a theory of criminal law, which he had intended to submit to Voltaire, but at the great man's door his courage failed him and he was about to beat a hasty retreat, when he was stopped by a beautiful and elegantly dressed woman.

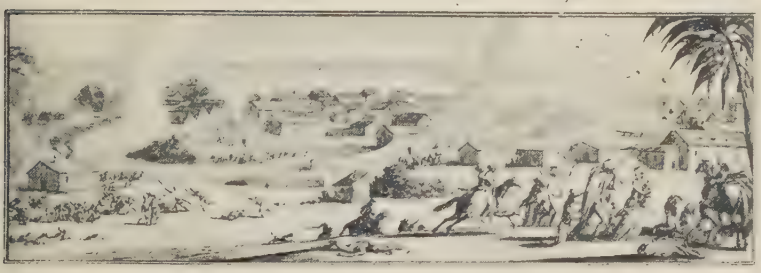
As she had a kindly and sympathetic face, Brissot made a clean breast of the matter, and the lady was so touched by his disappointment that she took him back and introduced him to Voltaire's host, the Marquis de Villette, and through him the manuscript was submitted to the aged philosopher, who wrote a warmly eulogistic letter to the author.

Brissot's unknown friend was Madame Dubarry, and he never tired of testifying to the kind heart of the reigning favourite. He next became translator on the staff of the *Courrier de l'Europe* at Boulogne; whilst here he won two literary prizes offered by the Academy of Châlons, and married Mlle. Félicité Dupont, a young lady associated with Madame de Genlis in the education of the Orléans princesses.

From Boulogne he crossed to England, and founded the European Academy of Science, a rickety, ill-conceived scheme, which after a brief and troubled existence, came to an untimely end.

Returning to France, Brissot made the acquaintance of the interior of the Bastille for a lampoon on the Queen, which he had never heard of; but the fine gentlemen who at that time conducted the affairs of the nation could not be expected to waste their time in examining evidence, especially when it related to a man so little to their mind as Brissot. He owed his release, after six weeks' imprisonment, to the solicitations of Mme. de Genlis, supported by those of Lord Mansfield, whose friendship he had made when in England. On his liberation, he went to Switzerland, and in collaboration with Clavière, the future Girondist minister, wrote

From an engraving by Levachez.



Designed and engraved by Duplessis Perteaux.

BRISSOT.

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several works on finance, which were published in the name of Mirabeau. Again crossing to England, probably as a secret service agent, he picked up a wide and peculiar knowledge of the shadier kinds of diplomatic intrigue of his day; he also made the acquaintance of several leading Quakers, and became so interested in the question of the abolition of slavery that on his return to France he again associated himself with Mirabeau and Clavière in the foundation of the *Société des Amis des Noirs*. He was next sent to the United States to study and report on the question of emancipation, with a view to the liberation of the slaves in the French Colonies. When he returned, the Revolution had begun. He threw himself with enthusiasm into the cause, and after publishing an enormous number of revolutionary pamphlets, he founded the *Patriote Français*, which soon made his name famous throughout Europe.

Madame Roland, who knew him intimately, says of Brissot :

" The simplicity of his manners, his frankness, his natural negligence, seemed to me in perfect harmony with the austerity of his principles; but I found in him a kind of lightness both of mind and character not altogether becoming the gravity of a philosopher; this always pained me, and his enemies made the most of it. For all that, the more I saw of him, the more I esteemed him. It would be impossible to find a more entire disinterestedness united to a more wholehearted zeal for the public welfare, or to give oneself to well doing with a greater forgetfulness of self. His writings have all the authority of reason, justice and

enlightenment; though as a man Brissot is entirely lacking in dignity. He is the best of men, a good husband, a tender father, a faithful friend, a virtuous citizen; his society is as agreeable as his character is obliging; confiding to the verge of imprudence, gay, naïve, disingenuous as a boy of fifteen, he was made to live with the wise, and to be the dupe of the wicked. A learned publicist, devoted from his youth to the study of social questions, and of the means of furthering the happiness of the human race, he understands man perfectly, but knows nothing of men. He recognizes that vices exist, but cannot believe him vicious who speaks to him with a fair tongue; and when at length he recognizes anyone as such, he pities him, treats him as one would do an insane person, but without distrusting him. He cannot hate; we might say that his soul, sensitive as it is, has not sufficient solidity to entertain such a vigorous sentiment. With wide knowledge, he has an extreme facility of work, and composes a treatise as another would copy out a song."

Yet this generous philanthropist has been, and is still, described, by many historians of the Revolution, as a base intriguer, a thoroughly insincere and self-seeking political adventurer.

"So little was he fitted for intrigue," wrote Buzot, "that the least idea of artifice or dissimulation was a torture to him. We often made fun of his simplicity, of his extreme good nature, and we used to say jestingly, 'Of all possible Brissotins, he is certainly the least Brissotin!'"

It is curious how this idea of Brissot's intrigues

got abroad. Even the bitterest of his opponents did not seriously believe in the accusation; and Camille Desmoulins, who certainly did not love him, tells how Danton delighted to tease Brissot by shaking his finger at him waggishly, and saying, "*Brissot, tu es Brissotin.*"

Yet it must be admitted that Brissot had not the qualities essential to the good party leader; he was at once too candid and too uncompromising, and the facility of his character made him too open to the influence of his friends.

Chief among the Deputies who gathered around Brissot in the Assembly were the three young barristers of Bordeaux, Vergniaud, Guadet, and Gensonné. All three had won fame in their profession; and they had no sooner been elected to the Assembly than they made France ring with their eloquence. Their marvellous speeches won them such high reputation that, when at length there was a split in the ranks of the Jacobins, those who followed Brissot were no longer named Brissotins, but Girondists, after the name of the Department represented by these great orators.

Pierre Victurnien Vergniaud, perhaps the greatest political orator France ever produced, was the son of an army contractor of Limoges. He early gave promise of great talents; and whilst at school, a poem of his composition attracted the attention of Turgot, at that time intendant of Limoges in the Limousin, who secured for him a bursarship at the Collège Duplessis at Paris, where he numbered among his schoolfellows Lafayette and Gorsas, the future

Girondist journalist. His easy manners, his wit, and an unusual facility of versification, won his entrance into the *salons* of a society where such gifts were more highly prized than any others. In 1778, he made the acquaintance of Thomas, the Academician, who introduced him to Dupaty, President of the Parlement at Bordeaux. The latter was so much struck by the young man's abilities that he recommended him to read for the Bar, and offered to pay all expenses whilst he was completing his studies. Vergniaud accordingly established himself at Bordeaux, where he took his degree of bachelor of law in April, 1781, and was admitted *avocat* in the same year. Dupaty then made him his secretary, and procured him many important cases.

Vergniaud soon made his mark, and almost from his *début* was acknowledged as the most brilliant of the long line of orators who had rendered the Bar of Bordeaux illustrious.

There was nothing remarkable about the personal appearance of Vergniaud, unless, indeed, it was his ugliness. His features were heavy, and devoid of expression ; his figure was ungainly and his step languid. But at the Bar or in the tribune, his features became animated, the black eyes flashed beneath the overhanging brows, whilst his golden voice electrified his audience and carried all before it.

His lovable disposition and extreme good nature won him many devoted friends, and even his enemies paid tribute to the staunchness and nobility of his character. Perhaps the greatest charm of his eloquence lay in the wide and tolerant humanity so

From a lithograph by Delpech, after a drawing by Maurier.

VERGNIAUD.

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characteristic of all his speeches. "You have sought to consummate the Revolution by terror," said he in his reply to Robespierre's attack on the Girondists; "I should have wished to consummate it by love."

Vergniaud's one great fault was an incurable indolence. He would work only to secure the barest necessities of life. It is related that an attorney one day brought him two important cases. Having listened to the details, Vergniaud yawned, stretched himself, then going to his desk and finding that he had still a little money left, arose, and, stepping to the door, bowed his client from the room, begging him to address himself elsewhere.

Such were the men with whom Louvet now allied himself. Whilst they fought for the Revolution in the Legislative Assembly, he made his activity felt without.

"Towards the end of 1791," says he, "everything announced that the French people were shamefully betrayed. Nearly all those who had defended the cause when the Constituent Assembly was in session, now one by one abandoned it. In the Legislative Assembly, Brissot, Vergniaud, Guadet and other good patriots found themselves in an alarming minority. Writers, impostors, fanatical priests, perfidious generals, seditious emigrants, intriguing priests, princes, ambitious despots within; whilst the enemy, planning our destruction without, were subsidized, favoured and protected by the Court of France. It became evident that Louis XVI. had accepted the Constitution only that he might destroy it. The hour of a serious revolution had struck. Since Louis broke his oath,

he absolved us from ours; since he endeavoured by every crime to re-establish the old despotism, we determined to employ every virtue in order to attain the Republic."

Louvet resolved to throw himself into the work with renewed ardour. It was not without pain that Lodoïska listened to his new plans. But when the first bitterness of disappointment had passed, she overcame the womanly temptation to set her love above what he thought his duty by the tyranny of tears.

"For a moment," he wrote, "she was seized with irresolution. She saw all the misery into which the country would be plunged by a new revolution; and the no less terrible evils which were perhaps in store for its authors. She saw the kings of the earth leagued together to war against a single people, and the whole world ravaged by the tempest. She saw the reward of my work in the Revolution, that sweet reward which at last seemed assured to us by the decree of divorce for a long time withheld, she saw our long cherished project of retirement indefinitely postponed, and our happy love itself put to the hazard. Yet her heart did not shrink from the glorious sacrifice. She wept over my plans, but urged me on with them. I recall only too well her sad presentiments, her generous tears, and the prophetic words which accompanied them:

"'Go,' she said, 'work for them; I consent; let us sacrifice ourselves for their welfare, but Heaven grant that at least we may not meet with their ingratitude.'"

Men and women really did talk so, during the French Revolution; the memoirs of the period are full of it. Louvet himself has pages of this sort of thing. It is only when he gets off his stilts that he is really interesting.

Louvet's enthusiastic labours soon drew upon him the attention of the chiefs of the Jacobin Club, and he was elected a member of their great Committee of Correspondence. He had among his colleagues Bosc and Lanthenas, the friends of the Rolands; Condorcet, who was too busy, and Vergniaud, who was too lazy, to give much help; Camille Desmoulins, whom he always regarded as an arrant knave, and Robespierre, at that time Desmoulins' master.

CHAPTER VI

Threats and intrigues of the *Emigrés*—Coercive measures proposed against them—Vergniaud's first great speech—King vetoes the decree against the *Émigrés*—Louvet's great oratorical success—Curiosity of the ladies—Louvet's interview with Camille Desmoulins and Robespierre on the proposed war with Austria—Letter from Mme. Roland—Robespierre declaims against the war—His trap for Louvet—Louvet creates a diversion—He overwhelms Robespierre with ridicule—He makes an implacable enemy and a life-long friend—Triumph of the Girondists—Louvet proposed as Minister of Justice—Robespierre intrigues against him—His life threatened—Robespierre's accusation—Jacobins attempt to howl Louvet down—A clever ruse—Louvet clears himself of Robespierre's calumnies—His placard-journal *La Sentinelle*—His witty parable on Marat—Breach between the Mountain and the Gironde—War declared against Austria—Disaster—Fury of Dumouriez.

FROM the date of the fall of the Bastille onwards there had been a steady emigration of the princes of the Royal house, the nobility, and officers of the army, the majority of whom established themselves at Coblenz, whence they breathed threats of vengeance against all who had taken part in the Revolution.

Nor did their enmity end here; for they deliberately attempted to induce Austria and Prussia to declare war and to invade France. In the nervous state in which the people then were, the threats of the emigrants, combined with the fear of an invasion, succeeded in arousing a fear among all classes of the community altogether out of proportion to the danger; so that when the Legislative

Assembly met on the 1st October it turned its immediate attention to the question of what coercive measures, if any, should be taken against the emigrants. The debate was opened on the 20th, and lasted nearly a fortnight. On this occasion the golden-mouthed Vergniaud won his first great success, and his speech delivered on the 25th secured his election to the Presidency of the Assembly five days later. It was eventually decreed that unless the emigrants returned to France by the 1st January, 1792, their property should be confiscated, and they should be condemned to death. However little consideration they had shown for him, the King not unnaturally declined to sanction a decree which was equivalent to a death sentence on his brothers, and on the 12th November he vetoed the bill. His enemies were not slow to turn this against him, and by his action he forfeited what little kindness his people had left for him.

It was on this question that Louvet achieved his first great triumph as an orator. On Christmas Day, 1791, he was deputed by the Section des Lombards to present at the bar of the Assembly a petition demanding a decree of accusation against the fugitive princes.

At the mention of his name, all eyes were turned on him with curiosity, and the ladies in the gallery, nudged each other, smiled, and exchanged significant glances as they craned forward to see the creator of that dear Faublas, whose enterprising ardour had won all their hearts a few years before. Nor was their eagerness abated by the recollection of

the persistent rumour that Louvet himself was the hero of his romance ; for it had been whispered that at seventeen, in the habit of her sex, it was he who had surprised the affection of the beautiful lady whom he has painted in the character of the Marquise de B——.

But there was little of the hero of romance about Louvet that day as he strode to the bar of the Assembly. His face was stern, his manner of delivery had all the pomp and circumstance of eighteenth century tragedy, and his oratory, inspired by a sincere revolutionary enthusiasm, was fanned to white heat by an undercurrent of genuine indignation at the baseness of those whom he came forward to accuse. Such enthusiasm was contagious ; the discourse was received with prolonged applause ; and Louvet took his place among the great orators of the Revolution.

He regularly attended the meetings of the Jacobins. As a member of the Correspondence Committee of the Club, he worked assiduously at the onerous but obscure task for which he had offered himself. He was not one of those who do good by stealth, and tremble lest it should not be found out. At one of these meetings, Camille Desmoulins, who was speaking to Robespierre, turned towards him and, with the villainous stammer which ruined him as an orator, said that Mirabeau was very pleased with his *Paris justifié*, and wished to make its author's acquaintance, for he was sure the man capable of writing such a pamphlet would make his mark in the Revolution.

From an engraving by Leyachez.

Designed and engraved by Duplessis Berteaux.

CAMILLE DESMOULINS.

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"On hearing words of praise, which were not addressed to him," says Louvet, "Robespierre stared at Desmoulins as if in astonishment, and then threw a disdainful look on me. Desmoulins, however, continued to speak; he asked my opinion on the war which some thought ought to be declared against Austria.

"'Do you not think it is necessary?' said I.

"He advanced a number of obscure and diffuse arguments.

"'And you?' asked I of Robespierre.

"'No,' he answered drily.

"'Why?'

"'For a great many reasons.'

"'Would you be good enough to name them?'

"'There are a hundred reasons.'

"'Do you not agree that it is inevitable?'

"'Perhaps.'

"'Would you have us wait until the Emperor has finished his preparations?'

"'We must see.'

"'He will not be ready in the spring; we might take him at a disadvantage.'

"'It is not time.'

"I made all sorts of objections, to which he answered in monosyllables, mostly devoid of sense.

"Those who know this man only by the public newspapers, in which the journalists owe it to their own interest to abridge his eternal declamations, to prune his innumerable repetitions, and to suppress his absurd contradictions, might suppose him to have some common sense. But I, who had heard him a

hundred times, knew already that he was an empty braggart, without understanding, without feeling, and without instruction. This conversation taught me that he was the vainest and the most presumptuous of men. I had yet to learn that, after Marat, he was also the most cowardly, the most spiteful, the most slanderous, and the most bloodthirsty."

It was at this time that the line of cleavage between the Girondists and the followers of Robespierre, Danton, and Marat became noticeable. The latter bitterly opposed the declaration of war against Austria. Like the Socialists of to-day (and, indeed, the democratic extremists in every age), they were uniformly hostile to an imperialistic policy, as such a policy involves grave diplomatic questions, which the deficiencies of their education taught them were quite beyond their capacity. Some, in fact, openly advocated the abandonment of all the French colonies.

Now, too, arose those mutual suspicions, which began to make life in French political circles intolerable. We find Robespierre complaining to Madame Roland of her friendship with his bitterest enemies, to which she replies :

" I do not know whom you look upon as your mortal enemies ; I am not acquainted with them, and, certainly, I do not receive them upon friendly terms, for I regard as such only those citizens of approved integrity who have no enemies but those of France.

" Time will reveal all ; its justice is slow, but sure ; it is the hope and the consolation of the good. I will wait for it to confirm or to justify my esteem for those on whom it is bestowed.

j'ignore qui vous regardés comme vos ennemis mortels ; je ne les connois pas ici, certainement, je ne les reçoit point chez moi en confiance, car, je ne voit, à ce titre, que des Citoyens dont l'intégrité m'est démontrée et que n'ont d'ennemis que ceux du Salut de la Patrie, ...

..... Le temps fera tout connoître ; sa justice est lente, mais

sûre ; elle fait l'espoir et la consolation des gens de bien. j'attendrai d'elle la confirmation ou la justification de mon estime pour ceux qui en sont l'objet.

C'est à vous, Monsieur, de considérer que cette justice du temps doit à jamais éterniser votre gloire, ou l'anéantir pour toujours.

Roland née Phlipon

" It is for you, Sir, to consider that time's justice will surely immortalize your glory or destroy it for ever."

" J'ignore qui vous regardés (*sic*) comme vos *ennemis mortels ;* je ne les connois pas et, certainement, je ne les reçois point chez moi en *confiance*, car, je ne vois à ce titre, que des citoyens dont l'intégrité m'est démontrée et qui n'ont d'ennemis que ceux du salut de la France. . . . . .

" Le temps fera tout connoître ; sa justice est lente, mais sûre ; elle fait l'espoir et la consolation des gens de bien. J'attendrai d'elle la confirmation ou la justification de mon estime pour ceux qui en sont l'objet.

" C'est à vous, Monsieur, de considérer que cette justice du temps doit à jamais éterniser votre gloire, ou l'anéantir pour toujours.

" ROLAND, NÉE PHLIPON."

At the Jacobin Club, Robespierre declaimed against the war with an obstinacy which was only equalled by the long-suffering patience of his hearers. When he rose to pronounce his fourteenth discourse on the subject, however, the benches showed unmistakable signs of boredom. He had with engaging modesty, just clinched his argument with the remark that " those who had combated his opinion by fine phrases would be hard put to it to find a reply to his last contention," when Louvet rose to create a diversion at any price. Robespierre's satellites attempted to howl him down. But one of Louvet's strong points was that when he had something to say, no power on earth could prevent him from saying it. And say it he did.

In one of his wittiest tales, Voltaire tells how Zadig, the wise young minister of the King of Babylon,

cured the excessive egotism of the satrap Irax. The great man was scarcely awake in the morning when, acting on Zadig's advice, the King sent the royal choir with a full orchestra to his chamber to perform a cantata in his honour, which lasted two hours, with the following refrain repeated every third minute :

" Que son mérite est extrême !
Que de grâces ! que de grandeur !
Ah ! combien monseigneur
Doit être content de lui-même ! "

When the cantata was finished, a chamberlain came forward and pronounced an eloquent discourse, lasting three-quarters of an hour, in which he assiduously praised him for all those good qualities that he lacked. During the three hours occupied in dining, whenever he opened his mouth to speak, the first chamberlain said, " He will be right ! " and Irax had scarcely said four words when the second chamberlain exclaimed, " He is right ! " Meanwhile, the two other chamberlains burst into fits of uncontrollable laughter at the good things which Irax ought to have said, but did not. When dinner was over, the cantata was repeated. The first day seemed to Irax delightful ; the second day he found less agreeable ; the third day was tiresome ; the fourth was intolerable ; and on the fifth day, which was simply torture to him, he was cured.

Louvet, in his attack on Robespierre, adopted the tactics of Zadig ; and, although Robespierre had an uncommonly good digestion for flattery, even his appetite was cloyed by the good things which Louvet showered upon him. That day he had no words to

reply. The speech was received with ironical cheers at his expense, and was ordered to be printed and distributed in the Departments. As Louvet descended from the tribune, Guadet, who had presided at the meeting, rushed forward and impetuously embraced him; and this was the beginning of a friendship cut short only by death. As for Robespierre, he recognized in Louvet a redoubtable enemy, clever, impetuous, and fearless; and, however short a memory he had for a kindness, he never forgot an injury.

After a hard fight the Girondists triumphed, Louis gave way by appointing a Ministry from their ranks, and within a month of their appointment war was formally declared against Austria. Dumouriez, who at this time worked with the Girondists, became Minister for Foreign Affairs; Roland was offered, and accepted, the portfolio of the Interior; and Louvet was at first proposed as Minister of Justice. This was too much for Robespierre, and he brought all his sinister influence to bear against his nomination.

At the Jacobin Club he caused it to be announced that Louvet had but three months previously returned to Paris from Coblenz, and had insinuated himself among the Jacobins only to spread discord. Louvet was out walking when he was charitably informed of the movement against him by one of his political opponents, who warned him that he would run great danger if he attended that night's meeting of the Club. But he was not the man to allow his enemies to calumniate him behind his back,

so with his usual intrepidity he made his way unperceived through the armed mob which awaited him outside the building. At the moment he entered the hall, Robespierre was denouncing the emigrants who, he asserted, had introduced themselves into the Society, and he ended his harangue by demanding that these members should be expelled forthwith. Taking in the situation at a glance, Louvet promptly rose to second the motion. For a moment Robespierre was taken by surprise ; he had promised himself that the arguments of the cut-throats he had placed outside would have proved incontrovertible.

But quickly recovering himself, he said that since Louvet had not been named it was against the order of the day to allow him to speak ; and, at a given signal, the rabble in the galleries rushed madly upon the new-comer, shaking their fists in his face and threatening him with cudgels. He stood up to his enemies without flinching : it was not the first occasion, nor was it to be the last, on which his iron nerve and ever-ready wit saved him from the fury of the mob. Indignant at this violence, a party of the more moderate Jacobins surrounded Louvet and offered to escort him home ; but he refused to leave until he had been heard in his defence. But the rules of the Club were not to be ignored, and Louvet, as Robespierre had said, was clearly out of order. At this juncture, one of his friends named Bois said to him :

" They refuse to hear you, do they ? Well, I'll make them hear you ! " With that he ran to the middle of the hall and shouted at the top of his voice :

" Robespierre is right, it is certain we have a traitor in our midst ; but I, at least, will not accuse him indirectly : it is Louvet ! "

By this bold step Louvet acquired the right of clearing himself from the cunningly veiled accusations of Robespierre. He rushed to the tribune, and gave an account of his life and actions since the beginning of the Revolution. The crowd in the galleries who scarcely an hour before had clamoured for his life, loudly applauded his speech. On the morrow, Robespierre spread the report that Louvet had caused himself to be accused in order that he might pronounce his own panegyric, with a view to being appointed Minister of Justice.

At the last moment the vacant ministry was bestowed upon Duranthon, a timid person cursed with ambition, who, like La Bruyère's Celse, " had little merit himself, but knew some people who had a great deal," and these had pushed him forward. When the hour of trial came he abandoned his colleagues in the vain hope of remaining in office.

There is no reason to believe that Louvet would not have made an excellent Minister of Justice ; but it is not in our hearts to regret the circumstance which drove him back to his pen. The Ministry was scarcely formed when Lanthenas introduced him to Roland and his wife. Lodoïska and he were soon numbered among their most intimate friends. On their suggestion Louvet undertook the publication of a placard-journal, called *La Sentinelle*, which was printed twice a week at Roland's expense, and posted on the

walls of Paris. In this journal, some numbers of which reached a circulation of twenty thousand, he taught the most ardent Republicanism, tempered by a sincere love of order and a wide and tolerant humanity. His pages are full of wit, humour, and pathos. He was a master of ridicule, the weapon of all others most dreaded by Frenchmen; and he wielded it mercilessly against the bloody-minded scoundrels who daily incited the people to murder.

"People," said he, in a number of his journal, "I am going to tell you a humorous fable, but one which will touch your friend Marat to the quick. Imagine that a hair of my beard possessed the faculty of speech, and said to me:

"'Cut off thy right arm, because it has defended thy life; cut off thy left arm, because it has conveyed food to thy mouth; cut off thy legs, because they have borne thy body; cut off thy head, because it has directed thy members!'

"Tell me now, O Sovereign People, whether I should not do better to preserve my arms, my legs, and my head, and cut off only this scrap of beard, which gave me such absurd advice?

"Marat is this morsel of the Republic's beard! He says:

"'Kill the generals who defeated your enemies! Kill the Convention which directs the Empire! Kill the Ministers who cause the Government to move ahead! Kill all—except myself!'"

The war had opened towards the end of April, with an abortive attempt to invade Belgium. But in

spite of the optimistic report of Narbonne,* the late Minister of War, as to the efficiency of the army, the first brush with the enemy proved that the French military forces from top to bottom were in a hopeless state of disorganization. Two divisions of French troops ignominiously turned tail and fled on the approach of the enemy, and one of them, suspecting Dillon, their general, of treachery, murdered him in cold blood. Dumouriez was furious. " You marched out like madmen," he wrote, on the receipt of the news, " and you came back like fools." Paris was in a ferment. The Minister for War was dismissed, and, after an interval of five days, during which Dumouriez acted as minister, Servan, a fine soldier and stern Republican, was appointed in his stead.

* The beloved of Madame de Staël.

CHAPTER VII.

The Girondists undermine the Throne—The King exercises his veto—Roland's letter of remonstrance—The King's resentment—He dismisses the Girondist Ministry—Insurrection of June 20th—Lafayette comes to Paris—Guadet's sarcasm—Arrival of the Federal troops—Brunswick's manifesto—He invades France—Insurrection of August 10th—Capture of the Tuileries—Napoleon watches the fight—Louvet rescues some Swiss Guards—Imprisonment of the Royal Family—Where was Robespierre?—Commune becomes all powerful—Arrest of suspected persons—Executive Committee of Twenty-One elected—Louvet becomes editor of the *Journal des Débats*—Lodoïska assists him—September massacres—First meeting of the Convention—Amar compliments Lodoïska—Her retort.

THE Girondists now set themselves to remove the last support of the tottering monarchy. They disbanded the King's body-guards, voted the banishment of all priests who refused to take the constitutional oath; and Servan proposed that a camp of twenty thousand men drawn from the Departments (*fédérés*) should be formed in the neighbourhood of Paris, ostensibly to train them for the army, but in reality to guard the Assembly against possible attacks either on the part of the Royalists, or of the Parisian mob, which had been armed by the Jacobins.

With the good-natured stupidity so characteristic of him, Louis sanctioned the decree for the disbanding of the body-guards, obviously directed against himself, but vetoed the other two. Thereupon Madame Roland, in her husband's name, addressed the famous letter of remonstrance to the King, in which she took

From an engraving by Baudran, after the portrait carried by Buzot.

MADAME ROLAND.

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upon herself to rate him like a truant schoolboy. Louis showed his resentment at this impertinence by dismissing the whole Ministry, except Dumouriez, whose policy it was to humour the King that he might rule him. But the ambitious General was as little to the King's mind as the disgraced Girondists, and finding that Louis distrusted him personally and had no faith in his plans, Dumouriez resigned and accepted a command in the army. Power then fell into the hands of Lafayette and his friends.

Alarmed by the dismissal of the popular Girondist Ministry, and by the truculent attitude of Lafayette, the armed mob of Paris revolted on June 20th, and invaded the Tuileries. On this occasion the King firmly maintained his veto on the decrees, and throughout the trying ordeal, acted with dignity and forbearance, with the result that the rebels withdrew from the palace. There were signs of a reaction in his favour.

Lafayette took the opportunity of coming to Paris and appearing before the Assembly to express his indignation at the riot, and to denounce the Jacobin Club, which he held responsible for the disturbance. He also proposed to take the King out of Paris. The significance of Lafayette's action was not lost on the Girondists ; and when he made his appearance in the Assembly, he was immediately assailed by Guadet in one of the most rancorous of those eloquent and uncomfortable speeches for which he was famous. Aiming his shafts at the unguarded heel of his Achilles, he accused him of deserting his army in the face of the enemy. With " sub-acid humour "

he asked whether the Minister for War had given him leave of absence; and ended by raising the whole question as to the expediency of allowing generals on active service to petition the Legislature. Although Guadet's vote of censure was not carried, his speech completely spoiled the effect of Lafayette's intervention. Nor could the King and Queen be induced to swallow their resentment and to trust themselves to the one man who could have saved them. They coldly rejected Lafayette's offers of service, and the General returned, deeply mortified, to his army.

Early in July the Federal troops from the Departments began to pour into Paris to celebrate the festival of the fall of the Bastille. On the 11th the Assembly declared that the country was in danger, and issued a rousing appeal for volunteers. Paris was seething with insurrection. Both parties prepared for the final struggle. The moment was chosen by the Duke of Brunswick, at the head of the allied armies, to begin his march on Paris. At the same time he issued his infamous proclamation, inspired by the hatred of the aristocratic refugees at Coblenz. He demanded immediate and unconditional submission; he declared that every town, village, or hamlet that opposed him, would be delivered over to the soldiery, and swore that if the slightest insult were offered to the Royal Family, Paris would be utterly destroyed.

The answer to these threats was the insurrection of the 10th of August, which ended in the capture of the Tuileries, the downfall of the throne, and the imprisonment of the Royal Family. The King

and Queen, with their children and immediate attendants, left the palace early in the day, but those left behind made a gallant fight, and every step the rebels advanced was purchased with a life. Napoleon, then a young artillery officer and an ardent Jacobin, watched the attack from a window overlooking the Tuileries Gardens. The sight of the infuriated mob before the palace filled him with anger and contempt, and, as he long afterwards told Bourrienne, he would gladly have seen it swept from the streets with grapeshot. He declared that the scene in the Tuileries Gardens, after the capture, was more terrible than any of his battlefields. It was his opinion that the palace might easily have been held, had it not been for the hopeless incompetence of the leaders and the unstable character of the King. The defenders made a mistake, common to brave men, of recklessly throwing away their lives when the critical state of the King's affairs demanded that they should preserve them.

When the fight was over, and the ghastly massacre of the helpless Swiss Guards, which marred the glory of the victory, had begun, Louvet made his way into the palace gardens and rescued a party of the soldiers by throwing open to them the corridors of the Assembly, and leading them into the chamber of the Diplomatic Committee, where they were concealed by Brissot and Gensonné.

During the whole of this critical day Robespierre lay concealed. It was not that he was a coward, but, wrapped close in his theories, the very idea of action confused him; and although his courage

never failed him, his nerves often did. If there was one thing he feared more than going too fast, it was lest the Revolution should leave him behind; and he owed his success very largely to his extraordinary faculty for keeping in time, and to his dexterity in reaping where bolder and more energetic men had sown. After August 10th there is a noticeable change in Robespierre's outlook. Till then, he was at heart in favour of a monarchical form of government; but the insurrection made it clear to him that the future was with the people. From that day his intelligence, as Lord Morley says, "seemed to move in subterranean tunnels, with the gleam of an equivocal premiss at one end, and the mist of a vague conclusion at the other."

On the morrow the Commune of Paris, which now became all powerful, ordered domiciliary visits to be made, and all suspected persons were arrested. The prisons were immediately filled to overflowing with terrified men and women, of all classes and all conditions, most of them confined without law or reason.

The immediate result of the revolt was that the government fell into the hands of the Legislative Assembly, which entrusted the work of administration to an extraordinary committee of twenty-one members. Roland and his friends returned to office, with Danton as Minister of Justice.

At this time Baudoin, the proprietor of the *Journal des Débats et des Décrets*, approached Louvet with a view to his undertaking the editorship, but he declined; and it was only after receiving earnest solicitations from Brissot, Guadet and Condorcet that he could be

induced to accept the proposal. Lodoïska, who had considerable literary ability, greatly assisted him in his work ; and during his proscription it often wrung his soul to think that she was perhaps suffering for her share in the enterprise. Soon after his taking up the editorship, Amar, the man who afterwards drew up the infamous Act of Accusation against the Girondists, called several times upon Louvet, under pretext of conducting Lodoïska home. He said he wished to pay his respects and to put him on his guard against the wiles of Brissot and Roland. One day, on leaving the Assembly, where he had distinguished himself by proposing a particularly cold-blooded motion, Amar overtook Lodoïska, and began whispering tender compliments into her ear. "Monsieur," answered Lodoïska, interrupting him coldly, "I have just heard what you said in the Tribune, and I despise you !"

Amar never again troubled them with his visits, but he became their most implacable enemy ; and the thought that this man had power of life and death in Paris, and that Lodoïska was perhaps at his mercy, was in the near future to freeze Louvet's heart within him.

In the last days of August came tidings of the surrender of Longwy to the Prussians. Panic seized on all classes of the community, and in their terror the people stood by, on September 2nd, whilst a handful of cut-throats massacred the inmates of the prisons. The Girondists, from the first, protested against the murders, and endeavoured to bring those responsible for them to trial ; but as nobody seriously

interfered, when the presence of a company of soldiers could easily have prevented them, the citizens of Paris must be judged morally responsible for one of the most terrible massacres recorded in history.

On September 20th the Convention met, and on the following day the Monarchy was formally abolished.

CHAPTER VIII

Social life in Paris during the Revolution—The *salons*—The Talmas —Their *fête* to Dumouriez—Louvet as a conversationalist—M. J. Chénier—Ducis—Dumouriez—Dramatic appearance of the People's Friend—Marat denounces the guests.

IT would be erroneous to suppose that Louvet's political labours occupied the whole of his time without relaxation. One of the most pleasing traits of the French is an extraordinary capacity for the enjoyment of the passing hour. They have a genius for social intercourse. Where one or two French men and women are gathered together, there gaiety will be also. In whatever situation he may be, a Frenchman may be trusted to find amusement; the joys of the present are apt to blind his eyes to the perils of the future. Louvet's well-known wit and vivacity made him a welcome guest in every Revolutionary *salon*. Even Mme. Roland unbent from her stoical gravity in his company, and responded to his sprightly sallies with a warmth which surprised those who knew only one side of her versatile character.

If the *salons* of Mme. de Condorcet and Mme. Roland were the most frequented of the political *salons*, that of Talma the actor, presided over by the charming operatic singer Julie Carreau, whom he had married in 1791, was the most attractive of the purely social *réunions* under the Republic. There,

statesmen and comedians, philosophers and actresses, poets and soldiers, wits and orators met together with the avowed object of forgetting their present discontents by throwing themselves with zest into the enjoyment of those superfluous things so necessary to the happiness of cultured men and women. One of these entertainments has become famous. On the 11th of October, General Dumouriez returned in triumph to Paris after checking the advance of the Prussians in the passes of the Argonne forests, and on the 16th a *fête* was given at Mme. Talma's in honour of the victorious general.

All the most brilliant artists, men of letters, and politicians met to give themselves up to the pleasures of society with an *abandon* of which the French alone have the secret. Mme. Talma did the honours of the house with a grace and tact which won all hearts. Her sweetness of disposition had already attracted Mme. Roland and Lodoïska to her, and the three women were fast friends. Louvet might have been seen with Vergniaud, Brissot, and other leading Girondists, engaged in an animated discussion with a slightly built man, with a sallow complexion and wily black eyes. It was Dumouriez. In the art of conversation he had few equals: Louvet was one, and between them they were the delight of every society in which they found themselves.* When Dumouriez spoke he had a way of driving home what he said by a sardonic and almost impudent smile in the eyes, which both attracted and repelled. He was at once a charlatan and a genius, and inspired

* *See* Dumont (Étienne,) *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau.*

every man who met him with a profound admiration and a no less profound mistrust. With women he was always charming, and easily found favour in their eyes. The only woman who ever saw through him was Mme. Roland, and he was never at his best in her company. It must have been particularly galling for a man of his type to know that she was reading the thoughts which his witty tongue took such pains to conceal. Two years later, he betrayed his country to save his head, and this defection contributed to the downfall of the Girondist party, with whom he had been allied. Under the Terror there was only one thing more dangerous for a general than defeat, and that was a too brilliant success.

In another part of the *salon* Chamfort exchanged cynical epigrams with the veteran La Harpe, whilst Ducis, the misguided enthusiast who spent his life in concocting ponderous misrepresentations of Shakespeare's tragedies for the French stage, was explaining to a group of admirers the plan of his new tragedy of *Othello*, the principal *rôles* in which were to be played by Talma and Mlle. Desgarcins. Near them stood Marie Joseph Chénier, well known to his contemporaries as a playwright and politician, but chiefly remembered as the brother and political opponent of the more famous poet of *La Jeune Captive*.

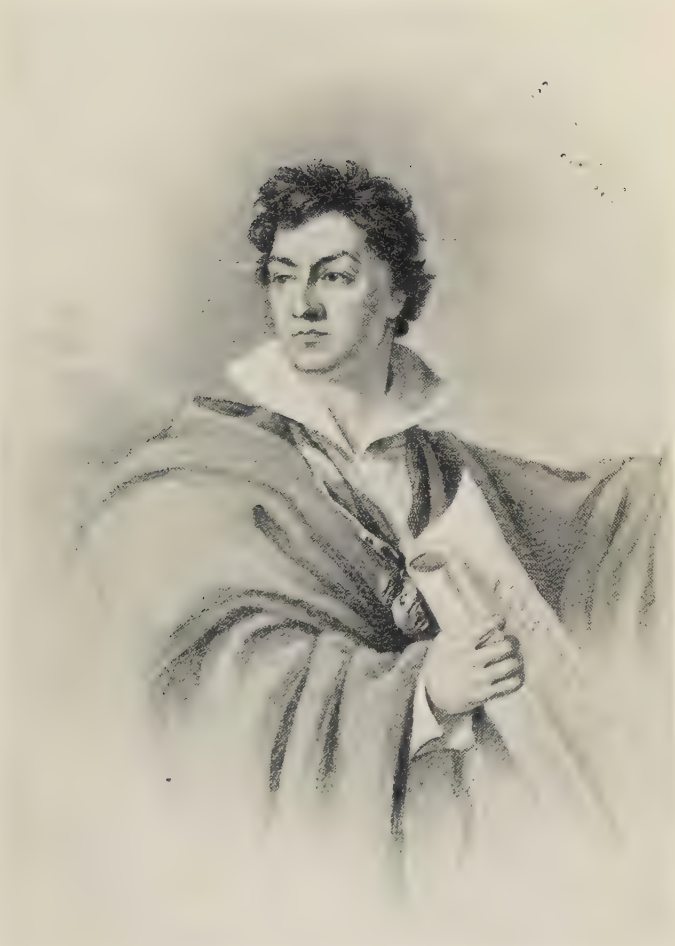
Chénier was a specially welcome guest, for it was to him that the great actor owed the two parts which made his reputation. Talma regularly attended the meetings of the Convention, for he held that the great Revolutionary orators were the finest masters that a young classical tragedian could possibly have. From

them he learned the great lesson of simplicity in the drama which was soon to win him a place in the front rank of great actors.

"I was amazed," he says, "to see these orators, who, in speaking, risked their heads, agitating the most formidable questions—questions of life and death: the arrest of a colleague or the judgment of a king—in the most simple fashion in the world, accompanying their words by the ordinary gestures of everyday life."

The air was filled with the perfume of choice flowers, the surging of costly silks, and the rich laughter of lovely women. Santerre, and a detachment of his soldiers in resplendent uniforms, mounted guard at the door. A hush fell on the assembly as Mme. Julie Candeille opened the piano and ran her white fingers over the keys. And, as her glorious voice rang out, all present forgot the horrors of the last months to dream those generous, impossible dreams for which they had fought and for which so many of them were to lay down their lives.

Suddenly there arose a sound of heavy footsteps in the hall, and a moment later a squalid figure, in a short jacket, showing a dirty shirt open at the neck, strode into the room. A red cotton handkerchief knotted carelessly about his head allowed a few wisps of lank hair to fall in greasy disorder on his shoulders. His face was livid, and the small yellow eyes looked like live coals which had burnt for themselves two great holes in the discoloured parchment of his skin. Accompanied by two men almost as noisome as himself, he planted himself before Dumouriez.



From an engraving by Henry Meyer, after a painting by J. P. Davis.

TALMA.

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" Are you the man called Marat ? " inquired the General.

Without deigning to answer the question, Marat said :

" Citizen General, we, the Citizens Bentabole, Montault, and Marat, all members of the Convention, have come in the name of the Society of the Friends of Liberty and Equality to demand of you an explanation of your action with regard to the République and Mauconseil battalions."

A few weeks before leaving the frontier, Dumouriez had degraded the battalions in question for having seized and murdered four deserters from the *émigrés* who had escaped to the French lines and asked to be received into the army.

On being assured of their repentance by their delivering up the ringleaders, the General had forgiven them, and the battalions had already wiped out their disgrace on the field of battle and regained the confidence of Dumouriez.

" I have placed all the documents relating to the case in the hands of the Minister of War," he answered.

" I have been unable to find a trace of them at the Ministry."

" I can only repeat that my report was duly laid before the Convention, and I must refer you to that."

" Oh, do not think to put me off in this way ; the Vigilance Committee has none of the papers, and demands that the battalions shall be protected."

" So you doubt my word," cried Dumouriez.

" If you deserved entire confidence," answered the

imperturbable Marat, "there would be no necessity for us to act as we are now doing. Is it likely that twelve hundred men would commit such excesses without very good reasons? Besides, I should not wonder if the four men were emigrants."

"Well, what if they were?"

"Emigrants, Citizen General, are enemies to their country; and, in any case, the punishment you inflicted on the battalions was outrageous."

"I have nothing further to say to you, Monsieur Marat," retorted Dumouriez, turning on his heel.

"Ha! you did not expect me here in this assembly of aristocrats, concubines, and counter-revolutionaries, did you?" croaked Marat.

Talma here stepped forward, and protested against these indecent and calumnious epithets addressed to his friends, and their wives and sisters; and, after uttering more imprecations and threats against all present, Marat and his acolytes withdrew.*

It is not easy to raise a laugh in an assembly which has just been scared by the sudden apparition of the apocalyptic figure of a Marat. Louvet and his fellow-wits, however, set themselves heroically to the task. There was a brilliant display of verbal fireworks, whilst the happily-inspired actor Dugazon, carefully fumigated the room with a censer.

Next day Marat denounced the conspiracy, as he called it, both at the Jacobins and in the Convention. Calling at the General's house, he and his companions had been directed first to the Théâtre de

* *La Vie du Général Dumouriez*, v. iii., pp. 223 *et seq.*; Fusil (Louise,) *Souvenirs d'une actrice.*

From an engraving by Levachez.

Designed and engraved by Duplessis Berteaux.

JEAN PAUL MARAT.

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Variétés, which Dumouriez had just left, and then to Talma's.

"A number of carriages and brilliant illuminations," he said, "indicated to us where this son of Mars was supping with the sons and daughters of Thalia; we found soldiers within and without: after traversing some chambers filled with pikemen, musketeers, dragoons, hussars—the warlike suite of the General—we came to a spacious room full of company, at the door of which was Santerre, commander of the Parisian Guards, performing the functions of a lackey or an usher. He announced me aloud, which I was sorry for, because it might have made those persons disappear whom I should have wished to have seen; but I did see some, whom it is of use to mention for the better comprehension of the operations of the ruling party in the Convention, and to let the public know who are the State jugglers with whom the commander of our armies is most connected. To pass over the officers of the national guards, the aides-de-camp, and others, who paid their court to the great Dumouriez, I saw in this august company the ministers Roland and Le Brun, attended by Kersaint and Lasource. As my name had thrown the company into confusion, I probably did not remark all who were present, I only remember these conspirators whom I have named; but it was early, and it is probable that Vergniaud, Buzot, Rabaut, Lacroix, Guadet, Gensonné, Louvet and Barbaroux were also at this entertainment; for they all belong to the same gang. At the sight of me Dumouriez was appalled."

A peal of ironical laughter greeted the last statement, and a member said :

" That is more than he was at the sight of the Prussian army."

When the laughter had abated, Marat imperturbably repeated :

" At the sight of me Dumouriez was appalled ; which is not to be wondered at, since I am known to be the terror of all the enemies of my country."

Marat then, looking very fierce, described his interview with the General, and concluded by saying that the questions he put to Dumouriez " disconcerted him so much that, instead of attempting to answer them, he was forced to sneak away abruptly with affected disdain ; and so, having made it clear that he could not justify his conduct, I left this assemblage of generals, and actors, and ministers and mountebanks to pass the night together."*

* Marat's speech, as reported by Dr. J. Moore in his *Journal during a residence in France*, v. ii., pp. 165 *et seq.*

CHAPTER IX

Louvet elected to the Convention—He resumes his feud with Robespierre—His suspicions of Robespierre, Danton, and Marat—Were they justified?—Character of Marat—His sincerity and disinterestedness—Usefulness of the fanatic—Louvet's suspicions not shared by his colleagues—Their apathy and gullibility—Louvet's political acumen—Moore's opinion—Robespierre the idol of the mob—Louvet prepares his *Robespierride*

LOUVET, who, on the nomination of Brissot, was elected to the Convention as the representative of the Department of the Loiret, was not long in renewing his feud with Robespierre; and by so doing he strengthened the tie which already bound him to the Girondists. He saw in Robespierre a tyrant corrupted by pride and ambition, secretly aspiring to the supreme power. He suspected Danton of accepting bribes from all parties, and using each in turn for the advancement of his own projects.

He foresaw the struggle between the two ambitious tribunes, though he despised Robespierre too much to think that his cunning would triumph over his infinitely greater rival. Marat was the only man in whom he seems to have been seriously mistaken. He believed him to be paid by England and the emigrants to urge on the Revolution to crime and bloodshed in order to provide them with a pretext for armed intervention. This was, of course, absurd. The most striking feature in Marat's character was his absolute sincerity. His

belief in the people was as genuine as his hatred of their oppressors. He was as merciless in carrying out what he believed to be the voice of the Lord as any Biblical hero. His mission was to slay the Amalekites, and he slew the Amalekites, man, woman, and child, not because he delighted in bloodshed, but because he felt it to be a painful duty which had been thrust upon him. When Agag fell into his hands, he might be trusted to hew him in pieces as conscientiously as did Samuel of old. His was the fury born of an acute sensibility, and he fell an easy prey to the morbid suggestions of a perverted conscience. Louvet and others of his contemporaries are scarcely to blame if they failed to see this.

It is not easy to form an impartial judgment of your enemy when he is mounted on your chest with a knife at your throat. Such a position is not conducive to the drawing of subtle distinctions in extenuation of his conduct. But it is the historian's duty to make these allowances, and to beware of accepting too readily the evidence of the man underneath.

Marat had been trained in a hard school. His life had been embittered by the hatred and injustice of men, and his body was tortured by a loathsome and painful disease. The people recognized in him one who had suffered as they had suffered. Whilst others wrangled over the axioms of a threadbare philosophy, Marat alone raised his voice on behalf of the wretched. When others hesitated or drew back, he alone came forward and boldly leaped the gulf

fixed between aristocracy and democracy. Little wonder that the rabble idolized him, for he was the Parisian mob incarnate. Of course, he was a fanatic; reformers always are. The man who forces his opinions down the first-comer's throat, the man who stands at the street corner shouting his confession of faith to the four winds, is a most useful member of society. It is the fanatic who makes the world go round; if it were not for him human society would die of inanition. That is where Marat's strength lay, just as Robespierre's lay in delation. With his usual acumen, Robespierre early recognized that Maratism was his only lever, and for this reason he bore with its founder, whom, in his heart, he abhorred.* But Marat's malady grew upon him, and when Charlotte Corday put him out of his misery, he was little better than a homicidal maniac.

But Louvet's suspicions of these men were not shared by his older colleagues. They hinted that his romantic and credulous disposition led him to imagine plots and conspiracies against the Commonwealth, where there was nothing more than the natural interplay of diverse passions and interests. His prophecies, like those of Cassandra, were believed only when they were fulfilled.

With that blind fatuity which so often characterized the actions of the Girondists as a political body, they at this time gave another instance of their child-like confidence in the good faith of their

* Riouffe, *Mémoires d'un détenu.*

terrible adversaries by appointing Garat, a lying, scribbling, cowardly creature, to the Ministry of Justice, and Pache, a smooth-tongued, smiling villain, to the Ministry of War. Buzot's warm recommendation was mainly responsible for these appointments, in spite of the repeated warnings of Louvet and Salle. Two years later, when the blood of the noble woman he loved was yet warm on the scaffold, the proscribed Buzot, broken in body and spirit, and within a few days of a horrible death, wrote bitterly repenting the blind obstinacy which had brought into power two of the most implacable of her accusers and judges.

The inaction of the Girondist leaders filled Louvet with despair. The only members of the party he could bring round to his way of thinking were Salle, Guadet, Barbaroux, and Madame Roland. He convinced them that if they did not strike at once they were doomed, and his opinion was speedily justified by the event. In spite of the chaff of his friends and the sneers of his enemies at his romanticism, an impartial examination of the evidence forces us to the conclusion that at every crisis in the career of his party Louvet showed that he possessed a keener political insight than any of his colleagues ; and that had they but listened to his repeated warnings, they would have remained in power, and the worst excesses of the Terror would have been prevented.

This was also the opinion of Dr. John Moore, father of the future hero of Corunna, an eminently level-headed Scotchman, dimly remembered by the curious as the author of *Zeluco*, the novel which is

said to have suggested to Byron the idea of *Childe Harold*. Moore was of an inquiring spirit, and during his prolonged stay in Paris he had used his eyes to some purpose.

"There is reason to believe," said he, "that Louvet's accusation was just; that Robespierre was so intoxicated with his popularity as to have entertained hopes of being appointed Dictator; and that Marat and Panis, by his connivance, sounded Barbaroux of Marseilles and Rebecqui on the subject, about the time when the Convention first assembled.

"The popularity of Robespierre at that period, however, was pretty much confined to the Department of Paris. The vast majority of the Deputies came to the Convention strongly prejudiced against him, and with a high opinion of the integrity of Roland, and of the talents and patriotism of the Gironde party; for two or three months after the first meeting of the Convention, any person who attended that Assembly would have been persuaded that Robespierre and his most active adherents were so much the objects of its detestation that he had no chance of ever having influence in it. By his influence with the Jacobins, the Municipality, and the Mob, and with the assistance of a minority of the Deputies, he forced on the King's trial, and then had the address to make the unwillingness which the Gironde party showed to that measure, and even their popular proposal of an appeal to the people, matter of accusation against them, and the cause of their ruin. Having now devolved the command of the National Guards on a creature of his own,

he imperceptibly obtained an irresistible sway in the Committee of Public Safety. Being supported by the Municipality and the Jacobin Clubs; never once yielding to pecuniary corruption, or shocking the eyes of the populace with personal magnificence; turning the talents and crimes of others to the purposes of his own ambition; cutting off his most confidential friends without remorse when he became the least jealous of them; having by wonderful address found means to have creatures of his own appointed Commissioners to most of the Departments; and the mob of Paris being always under the management of his agents, he at last attained his object. The Convention was the passive organ of his will, and Robespierre was the Dictator of the French Republic. But after having drenched every Department of France with blood, he became giddy by the exercise of power, forgot his original caution, and, by filling his very associates with terror, obliged them to be his executioners that they might not become his victims."

With that imaginative insight into character which is such a remarkable feature of his romances, Louvet read the hearts of the men with whom he had to deal, and what he saw there determined him to strike whilst there was yet time.

In the *salon* of Madame Roland, and with her encouragement and approval, he prepared an elaborate act of indictment against Robespierre, and incidentally against Danton, Marat, and the rebellious Commune of Paris. This was no easy task, for the men he attacked were the idols of the popu-

lace, and he had no definite proofs of their guilt. He had to rely solely on his eloquence; it is true that his confidence in his witty tongue was not often disappointed; yet it required an iron nerve and the greatest courage to carry out his resolution. When he had finished his discourse, he took it with him day by day to the Convention, watching patiently for a favourable opportunity of delivering it.

The longed-for chance came on October 29th, 1792, and on that day Louvet delivered the great speech of his life, perhaps the most famous oration pronounced during the whole session of the Convention.

CHAPTER X

Roland's report on the state of Paris—Alleged plot to murder the Girondist leaders, and to appoint Robespierre dictator—Robespierre defends himself—He grows eloquent about his own virtues—Dares anyone to denounce him—Louvet takes up the gauntlet—Robespierre is disconcerted—Louvet's great oration—Robespierre loses his nerve, and is unable to reply—His friends save him—Effect of Louvet's eloquence—Scene at the Jacobin Club.

ON that day Roland presented a memorial on the state of Paris. In this report, which is full of vigour, he expressed his abhorrence of the crimes of September, openly accused the Commune of instigating the late excesses, and bitterly condemned its systematic abuse of power and open defiance of the law. Roland at the same time read a letter, addressed to the Minister of Justice, revealing an alleged plot to murder Brissot, Vergniaud, Guadet, Buzot, Louvet, himself, and other members of the Convention who displeased the "real patriots," and of putting forward Robespierre as the most fit person to conduct the government in the present emergency.

"Ah! the villain!" shouted one of the members immediately his name was pronounced.

For some time after Roland's report had been read there was such an uproar in the Convention that no man could make himself heard. When Robespierre at length rose, the tumult increased

rather than subsided. He was at last heard to say that he wished to justify himself from the calumnies of the Minister. He was instantly interrupted by a cry to close the discussion; he then said he wished to speak against printing the memorial. This was at first refused, but when it was pointed out that they could not decree a proposition without hearing those who wished to speak against it, the Convention resigned itself, with a yawn, to the inevitable.

The picturesque pen of Dr. John Moore is responsible for the following report of this memorable sitting :—

"Robespierre began with a few sentences concerning the printing of the paper, and immediately deviated into an eulogium on his own conduct. Guadet, the President, reminded him of the question.

"'I have no need of your admonition,' said Robespierre; 'I know very well on what I have to speak.'

"'He thinks himself already Dictator,' exclaimed a member.

"'Robespierre, speak against the printing,' said the President.

"Robespierre then resumed, and declaimed on everything except against the printing. His voice was again drowned by an outcry against his wanderings. The President strove to procure silence, that Robespierre might be heard, which he no sooner was, than he accused the President of encouraging the clamour against him.

"No accusation could be more unjust or more injudicious than this, because it was false, and because everybody present was witness to its falsehood. The

President had done all in his power that Robespierre might be heard, and had actually broken three bells by ringing to procure him silence.

"The President then said: 'Robespierre, you are yourself witness to the efforts I have made to restore silence, but I forgive you that additional calumny.'

"Robespierre resumed, and continued to speak of himself a considerable time in the most flattering terms.

"Many people prefer speaking of themselves to any other topic of discourse, as well as Robespierre; but in him this propensity is irresistible. Praise acts as a cordial on the spirits of most people, but it is the praise they receive from others which has that effect; what is peculiar to Robespierre is, that he seems as much enlivened by the eulogies he bestows on himself as others are by the applause of their fellow-citizens.

"The panegyric he pronounced on his own virtues evidently raised his spirits, and inspired him with a courage which at last precipitated him into rashness. 'A system of calumny is established,' said he with a lofty voice, 'and against whom is it directed? Against a zealous patriot. Yet who is there among you who dares rise and accuse me to my face?'

"'*Moi*,' exclaimed a voice from one end of the hall. There was a profound silence, in the midst of which a thin, lank, pale-faced man stalked along the hall like a spectre; and being come directly opposite the tribune, he fixed Robespierre, and said: '*Oui, Robespierre, c'est moi qui t'accuse.*'

" It was Jean-Baptiste Louvet.

" Robespierre was confounded; he stood motionless and turned pale; he could not have seemed more alarmed had a bleeding head spoken to him from a charger.

" Louvet ascended, and appeared in front of the tribune, while Robespierre shrank to one side.

" Danton, perceiving how very much his friend was disconcerted, called out: 'Continue, Robespierre; there are many good citizens here to hear you.'

" This seemed to be a hint to the people in the galleries, that they might show themselves in support of the patriot, but they remained neuter.

" The Assembly was in such confusion for some time that nothing distinct could be heard. Robespierre again attempted to speak—his discourse was as confused as the Assembly—he quitted the tribune.

" Danton went into it; his drift was to prevent Louvet from being heard, and to propose a future day for taking into consideration Roland's memorial; and as Marat seemed at this time to be rather *en mauvaise odeur* with the Convention, Danton thought proper to make a declaration which had no connection with the debate, and which nobody thought sincere: 'I declare to the whole Republic that I do not love the man Marat. I frankly acknowledge that I have some experience of this person; and I find not only that he is of a turbulent and quarrelsome disposition, but also unsociable.'

" This conveys no favourable idea of Danton's eloquence. After finding the two first qualities in

Marat, it is surprising that he could search for a third. It is as if a man were to give as his reason for not keeping company with an old acquaintance, that he not only found him quite mad, and always ready to stab those near him with a dagger, but that, over and above, he was sometimes a little too reserved.

"This did not divert Louvet from his purpose; he persevered, and the Assembly decreed that he should be heard.

"He began by requesting the President's protection, that he might be heard without interruption, for he was going to mention things that would be mortally offensive to some present—who, he said, were already sore, and would be apt to scream when he came to touch the tender parts. As he continued a little on some preliminary topics, Danton exclaimed: 'I desire that the accuser would put his finger into the wound.'

"'I intend to do so,' replied Louvet; 'but why does Danton scream beforehand?'

"Louvet then proceeded to unfold the popular artifices by which Robespierre acquired his influence in the Jacobin Society; 'that he had introduced into it a number of men devoted to him, and, by an insolent exercise of his power, had driven some of the most respectable members out of it; that after the 10th of August he had been chosen of the Council, General of the Commune, and acquired equal influence there. Where he was on that memorable day,' said Louvet, 'nobody can tell; all we know is, that like Sofia in the play, he did not appear till after the battle. On the eleventh or twelfth he presented

himself to the Commune, and under his auspices all the orders for arresting the citizens were issued; that orders had been given for arresting Roland and Brissot, which, by the care of some of their friends, had not been executed; that a band of men had arrogated to themselves the honour of the Revolution of August, whereas the massacres of September only belonged to them.' Here Tallien and some others of Robespierre's faction, who were also of the General Council, began to murmur; on which a member called out: 'Silence, sore ones!' and Louvet resumed with great animation. 'Yes, barbarians! to you belong the horrid massacres of September, which you now impute to the citizens of Paris. The citizens of Paris were all present at the Tuileries on the 10th of August, but who were witnesses of the murders in September? Two, or perhaps three hundred spectators, whom an incomprehensible curiosity had drawn before the prisons.

"'But it is asked, Why, then, did not the citizens prevent them? Because they were struck with terror; the alarm guns had been fired, the tocsin had sounded; because their ears were imposed on by false rumours; because their eyes were astonished at the sight of municipal officers, dressed in scarfs, presiding at the executions; because Roland exclaimed in vain; because Danton, the Minister of Justice, was silent; and because Santerre, the Commander of the National Guards, remained inactive. Soon after these lamentable scenes,' continued Louvet, 'the Legislative Assembly was frequently calumniated, insulted, and even threatened, by this insolent demagogue.'

"Here Louvet being interrupted by the exclamations of Robespierre's adherents, La Croix went up to the tribune, and declared that one evening, while he was President of the Legislative Assembly, but not in the chair, Robespierre, at the head of a deputation of the General Council, came to the bar with a particular petition, which La Croix opposed, and the Assembly passed to the order of the day; that having retired to the extremity of the hall, Robespierre said to him, that if the Legislative Assembly would not with goodwill do what he required, he would force them to do it by the sound of the tocsin; on which, La Croix said, he had taken his seat as President, and related to the Assembly what had passed.

"Other members bore testimony to Robespierre's having pronounced the threat, and they confirmed the truth of all that La Croix had related. One added that La Croix's friends had entreated him not to return to his house that evening by the Terrace of the Feuillants, because assassins were posted there to murder him.

"This interlude excited fresh indignation against Robespierre, who made some efforts to be heard from the tribune. One of the members observed that a man accused of such a crime ought not to place himself in the tribune, but at the bar.

"Robespierre persisted, but the Assembly decided that he should not be heard till Louvet had finished.

"'The Legislative Assembly,' said Louvet, resuming the very sentence at which he had been interrupted, 'was calumniated, insulted, and menaced

by this insolent demagogue, who, with eternal proscriptions in his mouth, accused some of the most deserving representatives of the people of having sold the nation to Brunswick, and accused them the day before the assassinations began; in his bloody proscriptions all the new Ministers were included except one, and that one always the same. Will it be in thy power, Danton,' continued Louvet, darting his eyes on the late Minister of Justice, 'to justify thy character to posterity for that exception? Do not expect to blind us now by disavowing Marat, that *enfant perdu de l'assassinat;* it was through your influence, by your harangues at the Electoral Assemblies, in which you blackened Priestley, and whitewashed Marat, that he is now of this Convention. Upon that occasion I demanded leave to speak against such a candidate. As I retired, I was surrounded by those men, with bludgeons and sabres, by whom the future Dictator was always accompanied; those body-guards of Robespierre, during the period of the massacres, often looked at me with threatening countenances, and one of them said: "It will be your turn soon."'

Louvet concluded his eloquent speech on a rising note of indignation. Undisturbed by the clamour, he remorselessly followed his enemy step by step.

"Robespierre, I accuse thee of having long calumniated the best and purest patriots. I accuse thee because I think the honour of good citizens and of the representatives of the people belongs not to thee.

"I accuse thee of having calumniated the same

men, with even greater fury, during the first days of September; that is to say, at a time when thy calumnies were proscriptions.

"I accuse thee of having, so far as in thee lay, wilfully misunderstood, persecuted, and vilified the representatives of the nation, and of having caused them to be misunderstood, persecuted and vilified by others.

"I accuse thee of having continually thrust thyself forward as an object of idolatry; of having suffered it to be said in thy presence that thou wert the only really virtuous man in France, the only man who could save the country, and of having at least twenty times said as much thyself.

"I accuse thee of having tyrannized the Electoral Assembly of Paris by every ruse of intrigue and intimidation.

"I accuse thee of aiming openly at the supreme power.

"Legislators, you have in your midst another man, whose name shall not soil my lips, whom I have no need to accuse, for his own mouth condemns him. He himself has told you," continued Louvet, "that in his opinion it is necessary that 260,000 heads should fall if the country is to be saved; he himself has avowed what, for that matter, it would be idle in him to deny, that he has counselled the subversion of the government; that he has proposed the appointment of a tribune, a dictator, a triumvirate; but when he made this avowal, you were perhaps not aware of all the circumstances which rendered it a national delinquency; and this man is in your

midst! France is indignant. Europe is astounded. They await your decision.

"I demand that you empower a committee to examine into the conduct of Robespierre.

"And in order to prevent so far as possible the recurrence of such conspiracies as I now denounce to you, and for the maintenance of the liberty of the people, before which every private interest should disappear, I demand that you charge your Constitutional Committee to consider whether you should not pass a law banishing every man who shall make of his name a subject of division among citizens.

"Above all, I insist that you should this instant pronounce sentence upon a man of blood, whose crimes are proven, so that if anyone have the courage to defend him, he may mount the tribune, and in the name of our glory, for the honour of our country, I beseech you not to separate without having judged him. I demand an immediate decree of accusation against Marat. . . . Good God! I have named him."

Louvet's rhetoric utterly unnerved Robespierre. For some minutes he stood hesitating amidst the uproar, vainly trying to compose his features, and to steady his faltering voice. At length he regained the power of speech, which had temporarily forsaken him, sufficiently to demand time in which to prepare his defence. Seeing through his manœuvre, Louvet moved that he should be heard immediately. But the Convention ultimately adjourned for this purpose until the 5th of November. Robespierre's collapse on this and other occasions when taken by surprise

is significant, and seems to point to the fact that he was not gifted with a ready wit. In the privacy of his study he could concoct an eloquent and even convincing discourse on any given subject, but he was quite incapable of an effective impromptu speech. He was one of those people who think of the right thing to say a few seconds after the right moment of saying it. There are few things more bitter to the taste than the undelivered retort. On the 9th Thermidor his enemies triumphed by taking advantage of this infirmity.

"Robespierre," says Dr. Moore, "was thrown into such confusion that he did not fully recover his spirits and recollection afterwards. The effect of eloquence on an assembly of Frenchmen is violent and instantaneous; the indignation which Louvet's speech raised against Robespierre was prodigious; at some particular parts I thought his person in danger. I fancy the demand of so long an interval before he should make his defence was suggested by Danton, or some other of his friends; it was a prudent measure; had he attempted to answer immediately, he must have lost his cause. All his eloquence and address could not at that time have effaced the strong impression which Louvet had made.

"Although he drew the attack on himself by his imprudent boasting, yet he was taken unprepared; the galleries in particular had been neglected on that day, for the audience showed no partiality—a thing so unusual when he spoke, that it is believed to have helped greatly to disconcert him."

That evening the sitting of the Convention was as

usual rehearsed at the Jacobin Club. The story of Louvet's "abominable conduct" was on every tongue.

"By connecting petty conjectures with puerile suppositions," said Fabre d'Églantine, "they make out a vast conspiracy, and yet they will not tell us where it is, who are the conspirators, or what are their means." He proposed that Pétion, who was the friend of both men, should be asked to settle the squabble. But Merlin objected that to set up one citizen as the supreme judge between others was a violation of equality. Whereupon Fabre prudently withdrew his motion.

Robespierre the younger then rose to speak. His chief grievance was that he had not been calumniated as his brother had been.

"It is a moment of the greatest danger," he said. "All the people are not with us. The citizens of Paris alone are sufficiently enlightened; the rest still grope in darkness. Since the Convention has heard out Louvet's long-drawn lie, it is possible that innocence may succumb on Monday."

CHAPTER XI

Robespierre defends himself against Louvet's accusation—His popularity with the women of Paris—The galleries packed—Louvet is prevented from replying—Uproar in the Convention—The diplomatic Barère—His peculiar talents—His character—Lethargy of Louvet's colleagues—Decline of the Gironde—Louvet issues a pamphlet—A number of *La Sentinelle*.

THE day on which Robespierre was to make his defence the galleries of the Convention were crowded to suffocation. Before Robespierre could ascend the tribune a deputy complained that the galleries had been packed, chiefly with women who had been introduced for the purpose of applauding the speaker, while all impartial citizens were forcibly kept out. All eyes were turned to the galleries, and there was an outburst of merriment when it was found that they were almost entirely filled with women. It had often been remarked that Robespierre's eloquence found peculiar favour with the fair sex, and that the proportion of women present at the Jacobin Club was always greater when he was expected to speak. There was something of the cleric in Robespierre's nature, and it was perhaps this quality which fascinated them—the "cloth" has ever had a mysterious attraction for the feminine mind. Moreover, he had many of the virtues which strongly appeal to the average French working woman. He was industrious and thrifty, full of sentiment, and, above all, he was clean and honest.

"You accuse me," said he, "of aspiring to the supreme power. If such a scheme is criminal, it must be allowed to be still more bold. To succeed, I must have been able, not only to overthrow the throne, but also to annihilate the legislature, and, above all, to prevent its being replaced by a National Convention. But, as a matter of fact, it was I myself, in my public discourses and writings, who first proposed a National Convention as the only means of saving the country. To arrive at the Dictatorship, it was not enough to render myself master of Paris: I must also have been able to subdue the other eighty-two Departments. Where is my treasury? Where are my armies? What strongholds are in my hands? All the riches and all the power of the State were in the hands of my enemies. Under these circumstances, to make it credible that I had such a design, my accusers must demonstrate that I am a complete madman."

"That would not be difficult," exclaimed a member near him.

"And when they had made that point clear," continued Robespierre, "I cannot conceive what they will gain by it, for then it will remain for them to prove that a madman can be dangerous in a State."

"Bah!" said the Deputy who had already spoken, "they are the most dangerous of all."

He denied having had much connection with Marat, and explained how he had been induced to have the little which he avowed, and he declared that Marat had not been elected to the Convention on his recommendation, nor, perhaps, from any high opinion

which the electors had of that Deputy, but from their hatred to the aristocrats, whose mortal enemy they knew him to be.

"I am accused," continued he, "of having exercised the despotism of opinion in the Jacobin Society. That kind of despotism over the minds of a society of freemen could only be acquired by reasoning. I find nothing, therefore, to blush at in this accusation. Nothing can be more flattering to me than the good opinion of the Jacobins, especially as Louis XVI. and Monsieur de Lafayette have both found that the opinion of the Jacobins is the opinion of France. But now, that society, as Louvet pretends, is not what it was: it has degenerated; and perhaps, after having accused me, his next step will be to demand the proscription of the Jacobins. We shall then see whether he will be more persuasive and more successful than were Leopold and Lafayette."

Passing from the personal accusations made against him, Robespierre turned to repel the attack on the Commune of Paris.

"They are accused of arresting men contrary to the forms of law. Was it expected, then, that we were to accomplish a revolution in the government with the code of laws in our hands? Was it not because the laws were impotent that the Revolution was necessary? Why are we not also accused of having disarmed suspected citizens, and of excluding from the assemblies which deliberate on the public safety all known enemies of the Revolution? Why do you not bring accusations against the Electoral

Assemblies and the Primary Assemblies? They have all done acts, during this crisis, which are illegal, as illegal as the overthrowing of the Bastille, as illegal as Liberty itself.

"When the Roman consul had suppressed the conspiracy of Catiline, Clodius accused him of having violated the laws. The consul's defence was that he had saved the Republic.

"We are accused of sending Commissioners to the various Departments. What! is it imagined that the Revolution was to be completed by a simple *coup-de-main*, and seizing the palace of the Tuileries? Was it not necessary to communicate to all France that salutary commotion which had electrified Paris.

"What species of persecution is this, which converts into crimes the very efforts by which we broke our chains? At this rate what people will ever be able to shake off the yoke of despotism? The people of a large country cannot act together; the tyrant can only be struck by those who are near him. How is it to be expected that they will venture to attack him, if those citizens who come from the distant parts of the nation shall, after the victory, make them responsible by law for the means they used to save their country? The friends of freedom, who assembled at Paris in the month of August, did their best for general liberty. You must approve or disavow their whole conduct taken together, and cannot, in candour, examine into partial disorders, which have ever been inseparable from great revolutions. The people of France, who have chosen you as their delegates, have ratified all that happened in bringing

about the Revolution. Your being now assembled here is a proof of this : you are not sent to this Convention as Justices of the Peace, but as Legislators ; you are not delegated to look with inquisitorial eyes into every circumstance of that insurrection which has given liberty to France, but to cement by wise laws that fabric of freedom which France has obtained."

He then attempted to exonerate the people from the blame attaching to the September massacres by calling to mind the dangers which threatened Paris, and he justified the fury of the citizens at the thought of marching to the frontier, leaving behind them conspirators, who, he asserted, would have risen on the first opportunity and massacred their families.

" I am told," concluded Robespierre, " that one innocent person perished among the prisoners, some say more ; but one is doubtless too many. Citizens, it is very natural to shed tears over such an accident. I myself have wept bitterly over this fatal mistake. I am even sorry that the other prisoners, though they all deserved death by the law, should have fallen by the irregular justice of the people. But do not let us exhaust our tears on them : let us save a few for ten thousand patriots sacrificed by the tyrants around us ; weep for your fellow-citizens, dying beneath the ruins of their homes, shattered by the cannon of those tyrants ; let us reserve a few tears for the children of our friends murdered before their eyes, and their babes stabbed in their mothers' arms, by the mercenary barbarians who invade our country. I must confess that I greatly suspect that kind of

sensitiveness which is shown in lamenting the death of the enemies of freedom alone. On hearing those pathetic lamentations for Lamballe and Montmorin, I think I hear the manifesto of Brunswick. Cease to unfold the bloody robe of the tyrant before the eyes of the people, or I shall believe you wish to rivet Rome's fetters upon her again. Admirable humanity! which tends to enslave the nation, and manifests a barbarous desire to shed the blood of the best patriots!"

It is easy to imagine the effect which this adroit blending of subtle logic and womanly emotion had on an assembly of men peculiarly susceptible to those qualities. The speech was received with acclamation, and Robespierre felt that he had weathered the storm. A member then rose to move the order of the day. This was opposed by Louvet, who demanded leave to reply. There was a mad rush of many members towards the tribune, to support or to oppose the motion. The uproar was deafening. It was one of the vices of the French parliamentary system, or, rather, lack of system, that discussion was impossible. A man accused of inciting the people to murder was held to have refuted the charge when he had delivered a florid discourse on the Republican virtues, as illustrated by his own political career.

The clamour in the Convention shocked all passive observers. Everyone spoke at once, and amid the tumult, motions were put to the vote and declared carried, whilst half the members were ignorant of the fact until enlightened by the public journals on the following day.

"I expect little good of Deputies who are incapable of listening," said David Williams, the Unitarian minister, to Madame Roland. "You French no longer study that external propriety which stands for so much in Assemblies; heedlessness and coarseness are no recommendations for a Legislature;" and this bitterly disillusioned Republican left Paris in disgust. It was in keeping with this head-over-heels method of parliamentary procedure that Louvet was prevented from replying to Robespierre's counterblast.

When the tumult had at length subsided to the state of unrest which characterized the Convention in its normal condition, Barère rose to make one of those sharp, discreet, inimitable speeches for which he was famous. The Convention always listened readily to what he had to say, for he had somehow acquired a reputation for impartiality. This he owed in a great measure to his extraordinary aptitude for formulating other people's convictions. Thus what was often naught but his moral cowardice, was belauded as worldly wisdom. Endowed with an unerring sensitiveness to coming political changes, which made of him a sort of Revolutionary barometer, he was enabled to profit by all parties and still be subservient to none. Not the least remarkable among his positive qualities, which distinguished him from many greater and better men among his contemporaries, was an infinite capacity for keeping his head upon his shoulders.

Is it for us to condemn him if he developed this natural faculty to the utmost? In times of social

upheaval it is easy for a man of parts, both on public and private grounds, to set an exaggerated estimate upon the value of his life. Under the Directory someone asked Sieyès what he did during the Terror. "I lived," was the significant reply. Barère, like Sieyès and many another, was content to thank the gods and make no boast of it.

I should be sorry to see a mercurial, irresponsible creature such as Barère held up to the admiration of his fellows; but when I read Macaulay's judgment of him, however just it may be, I feel much in the position of a man called upon to witness a public knoutting, and I am glad to turn my eyes from the shameful spectacle.

Barère's circumspection on the present occasion clearly indicates that the rival parties were equally matched. Until he saw which way the tide was setting, he alternately hit and flattered each of the parties. His attitude was that of George Eliot's diplomatic innkeeper, "You're both right, and you're both wrong, as I always says."

"Citizens," said he, "if there existed in the Republic a man born with the genius of a Cæsar or the boldness of a Cromwell, a man in possession of the power to do harm, combined with the talents of a Sylla; if we had here any legislator of great genius, of vast ambition, with the public treasury at his disposal, and a great party supporting him in the Senate or in the Republic: a general, for instance, his brow wreathed with laurels, returning among you to dictate laws, or to violate the laws of the people, I would come boldly forward and accuse him, for such

a man might be dangerous to liberty. But that you should flatter by your suspicion these small fry of politics, who will never enter the domain of history, these petty dabblers in commotion, whose civic crowns are already entwined with cypress, this, I say, quite passes my comprehension."

He concluded by proposing the order of the day, on the ground that the National Convention ought not to occupy itself with any interests other than those of the Republic.

" I oppose your order of the day," shrieked Robespierre, " if it contains a preamble injurious to me ! "

Ignoring Robespierre's interruption, the Convention passed to the simple order of the day. Thereupon, many of the Girondists, thinking that such a motion would extinguish Robespierre's influence as effectually as exile or death, actually joined their opponents in preventing Louvet from replying.

From that day the star of the Girondists began to wane, whilst that of Robespierre waxed greater and greater. Men of discernment, such as Dr. John Moore and Gouverneur Morris, now began to suspect that the Girondists were no match for their terrible adversaries. Louvet and the more hot-headed members of the party were untiring in their efforts to arouse them to a sense of their peril. But, no ; they felt themselves committed to a policy of moderation ; and, like all moderates, opposed violence with moderation. They had a horror of bloodshed, which made them forget that the maintenance of civilization like good government are matters of infinitely greater importance than the lives of a score of black-

hearted scoundrels such as Hébert. Adherence to principles such as theirs could not make saints, but it did make gentlemen of them; and, as the world goes, that is something.

Baffled in his attempt to crush his enemy in the tribune, Louvet issued his philippic as a pamphlet, and the streets of Paris and every important town in the provinces were soon ringing with the cry of the newsvendors: "*L'Accusation contre Maximilien Robespierre; par Citoyen Louvet!*"

In spite of his quarrel with Robespierre, Louvet found time to write a last number of the *Sentinelle*. As it affords an excellent example of his journalistic style, the reader is invited to inspect the facsimile reproduction, a translation of which appears below. The translation is a rough one, but will give some idea of a Revolutionary placard journal:

No. 73. 21 November. Year 1 of the French Republic.

THE SENTINEL

ON

LOUIS THE LAST

"REPUBLICANS,

"It is to Louis the Last that the writing here refers. God hath numbered thy reign, it says, let us see what this man hath done? On ascending the throne, he recalled the *parlements*, those eternal oppressors of the people. He surrounded himself with rascally ignorant and fraudulent Ministers: Maurepas, grown old in debauchery and idleness; Miromesnil, an enrobed comedian, with a

twisted mind, who bartered justice and in doing so used false scales; Saint-Germain and Dumuis, destroyers of the soldiery, of whom one was born to be a vile swash-buckling corporal rather than a minister, and the other a Capucin sacristan rather than a Marshal of France; Calonne, who drank the blood and sweat of the people in the trough of the lewd; Necker, the pearl of egoists, a seamy-sided genius, who was a philosopher when he should have been a Controller-General, and a Controller-General when he should have been a philosopher; in short, a gang of flatterers, intriguers and sharpers, beginning with his brothers and ending with his meanest valets; he agreed to their swindles by day, and tolerated their outrages by night.

"What has this man done? Avaricious, he has multiplied the taxes; ferocious and intemperate, he passed his mornings in shedding the blood of wild animals and his evenings in the mire of gluttony; ignorant, he despised art, talent and knowledge, and would have debased enlightenment; superstitious, he would have refused burial to Voltaire and Rousseau; a persecutor, he signed millions of *lettres-de-cachet;* cruel, he caused the hair of these to be cut, and overwhelmed those with blows; puerile, he gloried in carrying heavy burdens, and in trials of strength with the basest wrestlers; in short, chance had placed him in the highest rank, whilst his nature and moral qualities put him on a level with the most contemptible of mankind.

"That, then, is what this man has done. Is he incorrigible? Let us see. Let the people rise! and the people rose: the Revolution came about. Since then, what has this man done? He has sworn fidelity to his country, and has done all he could to betray her; with the gold lavished upon him, he has corrupted the constituents, the Ministers, the chiefs of the troops; he has fawned on the enemies of France; he has cringed before

the priests who have rent her; welcomed the nobles who burnt her; subsidized the foreigners who laid her waste; in short, greedy of assassinations, tortures, and crimes of every kind, surpassing in horrors all that the imagination of man could lend to the tyrants of old, he meditates on the slaughter, in one day, of all the patriots, from the islands of America to the banks of the Rhine; from the Pyrenees to the shores of the Baltic. It is time to check his criminal career. God has numbered his kingdom. Let the people rise again! They rose, and the reign is brought to an end.

"Then, Louis the Last, thou art placed in the one scale, and the people in the other; who shall prevail, they or thou? Shall it be thou, who art but a subject? Shall it be they, who are thine eternal and unchangeable sovereign? Shall it be thou who didst draw up the batteries on Montmartre to destroy them? who spendest the money which thou owest to their beneficence in forestalling the food which should nourish them; who, on the 28th of February, surroundedst thyself with pretended friends, who carried only poignards and daggers—the arms of assassins; who preferedst the shame of flight, like a malefactor, to the honour of remaining in the bosom of the nation which overwhelmed thee with kindness; who swaredst to a constitution, to thine own advantage, only that thou mightest use it to destroy the country; who meditatedst, lastly, the overthrow of the people as a recompense for the generous pardon they had accorded thee, for the crown they had left thee, and for the forgiveness of thy prevarications? Shall it be they who have opposed to so many crimes only an unalterable virtue, an unique and imperturbable patience, a clemency which might well be called blind; who, lastly, on the day on which thou demandedst their heads of thy satellites, were generous enough, even at the height of their terrible fury, to spare thine? Who, then, shall prevail? Shall

it be thou? Shall it be they? No: thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.

"The author of the journal *The Sentinel*, wishing to avoid all outside influences, has determined to unite his work with *The Bulletin of the Friends of the Truth*, published by the free citizens, directors of the printing works of *The Social Circle;* subscribers are hereby informed that they will receive the latter journal for the rest of their subscriptions which have not yet expired."

N°. 73. 15 21 NOVEMBRE. l'An 1er. de la Répubilque Françoise.

LA SENTINELLE SUR LOUIS LE DERNIER.

RÉPUBLICAINS,

C'EST de Louis le dernier dont l'écriture entend parler ici. Dieu a calculé ton règne : il a dit, voyons ce qu'a fait cet homme ? En montant sur le trône, il a rappellé les *parlemens*, ces éternels oppresseurs du peuple. Il s'est entouré de ministres scélérats, ignorans et voleurs : d'un Maurepas, vieilli dans la débauche et l'oisiveté ; d'un Miromesnil, histrion en symare, dont l'esprit bossu vendoit la justice et la vendoit à faux poids : d'un Saint-Germain, d'un Dumuls, destructeurs du militaire, dont l'un étoit né pour être un vil caporal échlager, plutôt que ministre, et l'autre sacristain des capucins, plutôt que maréchal de France : d'un Calonne qui buvoit le sang et la sueur du peuple dans l'auge de la débauche : d'un Necker, la perle des égoïstes, génie à rebours, philosophe quand il falloit être contrôleur-*général*, et *controleur*-général quand il falloit être philosophe : enfin, d'un tas de flatteurs, d'intrigans, de filoux, en commençant par ses frères et finissant par ses derniers valets, dans le jour il signoit les escroqueries, et dans la nuit il souffroit les outrages.

Qu'a fait cet homme ? Avare, il multiplia les impôts : féroce et crapuleux, il passa le matin dans le sang des bêtes fauves, et le soir dans la fange des festins : ignorant, il méprisa les arts, les talens, les connoissances, il voulut abâtardir les lumières : superstitieux, il voulut que Voltaire et Rousseau fussent sans sépulture : persécuteur, il signa les millions de lettres-de-cachet : cruel, il fit couper les cheveux à ceux-ci, accablé de coups ceux-là : puérile, il mit sa gloire à porter des fardeaux, et à le disputer de force avec les plus vils lutteurs : enfin, le hasard le plaça dans le premier des emplois, et la nature, par ses qualités morales, le rangea dans la classe des hommes les plus méprisables.

Voilà donc ce qu'a fait cet homme. Est-il incorrigible ? essayons. Que le peuple se lève, et le peuple se leva : la révolution se fit. Depuis, qu'a fait cet homme ? il a juré fidélité à sa patrie, et l'a trahie de toutes ses forces : il a corrompu avec l'or qu'on lui prodiguoit, les constituans, les ministres, les chefs des troupes : il a caressé tous les ennemis de la nation : il a rampé devant les prêtres qui la déchiroient, accueilli les *nobles* qui l'incendioient, soudoyé les étrangers qui la dévastoient ; enfin, avide d'assassinats, de supplices, de forfaits de tous les genres, surpassant tout ce que l'imagination de l'homme peut prêter d'horreurs aux tyrans de tous les siècles, il médite d'égorger dans un jour tous les patriotes, depuis le fond des isles de l'Amérique jusqu'aux rives du Rhin, depuis les Pyrénées jusqu'aux bords de la Baltique : il est tems d'arrêter sa criminelle carrière : Dieu a calculé son règne : que le peuple se lève encore ! il se lève : et le règne est mis à fin.

Alors, Louis le dernier, on t'a mis dans une balance et le peuple dans l'autre ; qui l'emportera ou de lui ou de toi ? Sera-ce toi ? n'es que le sujet ? sera-ce lui qui est un souverain éternel, immuable. Sera-ce toi qui fis dresser des batteries sur Montmartre pour le foudroyer, qui dépensas l'argent que tenois de ses bienfaits à accaparer, dans l'étranger, les denrées qui devoient le nourrir, qui le vingt-huit février t'entouras des prétendus amis qui n'avoient pour armes que celles des assassins, les poignards et les mulets ; qui préféras la honte de fuir comme un malfaiteur, à l'honneur de rester au sein d'une nation qui te combloit de biens ; qui juras une constitution qui n'étoit avantageuse qu'à toi, avec la volonté de t'en servir seulement pour égorger la patrie ; qui médite enfin de faire périr tout ce peuple, pour récompenser du pardon généreux qu'il t'avoit accordé, de la couronne qu'il t'avoit laissée et de l'oubli de tes forfaitures ? Sera-ce lui qui n'a opposé à tant de crimes qu'une vertu inaltérable, qu'une patience unique, imperturbable, qu'une clémence que l'on pourroit dire aveugle ; qui, le jour enfin où tu demandois sa tête à tes satellites, fut assez généreux, dans l'orage épouvantable de sa fureur, pour respecter la tienne ? qui l'emportera donc ? Sera-ce toi ? sera-ce lui. Non : on t'a mis dans la balance, et tu as été trouvé trop léger.

Dieu a calculé ton reigne et la mis afin. tu as été mis dans la balance et tu as été trouvé trop lege

L'AUTEUR du journal *la Sentinelle*, voulant éviter toute influence étrangère s'est déterminé à réunir ses travaux au Bulletin des Amis de la vérité, publié par les citoyens libres, directeurs de l'imprimerie du Cercle social ; les abonnés sont prévenus qu'ils receyront ce dernier journal pour le reste de leur abonnement qui n'est point encore échu.

De l'Imprimerie du Cercle Social, Rue du Théâtre-François, n°. 4.

CHAPTER XII

Barbaroux proposes drastic measures—Girondists jealous of the domination of Paris—The Mountain charge them with Federalism —Were they Federalists ?—Hébert employed to calumniate the Girondists—*Le Père Duchesne*—Origin—The real Hébert—A specimen number of the *Père Duchesne*—Hébert's vile attack on Mme. Roland and Louvet

BARBAROUX now moved the adoption of four momentous decrees, aimed directly at the Commune, which were accepted almost unanimously by the Girondist party.

The first declared that the capital should lose the right of being the seat of the Legislature when it could no longer find means of protecting the national representation from insult and violence.

The second proposed that the Federal troops from the Departments and the National Guards were, conjointly with the armed Sections of Paris, to guard the Deputies to the Convention and to maintain public order.

The third suggested that the Convention should constitute itself a court of justice for trying conspirators against the commonwealth.

The fourth boldly urged the Convention to abolish the Municipality of Paris.

As it will be seen, this Bill is animated by an extreme jealousy of the influence of Paris. This feeling had shown itself even on the first sitting of the Convention, and now became a marked feature

of the Girondist policy. As early as September 25th, 1792, Lasource had demanded that "Paris should, like every other Department, exercise only an eighty-third share of influence in the State." It was on account of speeches such as these that the charge of Federalism was so constantly brought against the Girondists. Undoubtedly, the fundamental difference between the two parties was that whilst the Mountain wished Paris, so long, at least, as the war lasted, to retain the direction of affairs, the Girondists denied to the capital the right of supremacy over the other Departments. Brissot, as we have seen, in a previous chapter, had been to America, where a man of his political insight could not have failed to observe the disastrous effects of federal government.

He knew, as every politician knew, that the Confederation of the thirteen colonies, after the War of Independence, had proved itself inefficient to the last degree. By that form of government, each state was recognized as an independent body, which voluntarily delegated certain powers to the Congress, sitting in the capital. The inherent vice of a Confederation of this kind is that each state retains so much power that the Central Legislature has, to all practical purposes, none at all.

Thus if one of the states chose to ignore the will of the other twelve, there was no remedy but civil war; and the consciousness of this hampered, if it did not paralyze, the government at every turn. With the example of the United States before their eyes, the Girondists were, to a man, convinced of the imprac-

ticability of federal principles; and one of their number, Barbaroux, was the first to write unequivocally condemning that form of government. Yet, on the other hand, they were determined to prevent the capital from domineering over the other Departments, and many times urged that the seat of government should be removed to one of the provincial towns, where its deliberations could be conducted free from the violence of the Parisian mob. That is a very different thing from plotting against the unity of the state. But the distinction was too subtle for the mental grasp of the semi-educated *bourgeoisie*, who by a confusion of ideas, which was carefully fostered by the Mountain, were persuaded that the Girondists sought to split up the country into a number of small independent republics.

As a matter of fact, the only persons who had publicly advocated federal principles were Billaud-Varenne, Collot d'Herbois, Lavicomterie, and the latest of all the recruits of the Mountain, Barère, who, in his anxiety to compound for the equivocal origin of his newly-found convictions, turned with peculiar ferocity to rend his former associates of the Gironde.

Having, by an ingenious and unscrupulous stratagem, undermined the influence of their opponents over the middle classes, the Mountain now sought by fresh calumnies to destroy their hold on the masses. They knew that with the ignorant multitude, the distortion of their adversaries' principles would avail them nothing. The general scarcity of food provided them with a weapon ready

to hand. It is useless arguing with a hungry man, but it is easy to arouse his suspicions, and to delude him as to the cause of his misery. Recognizing this truth, the violent faction adroitly turned the popular suspicions against the rival party.

For this purpose they made use of the diabolical talents of Hébert, the infamous author of the infamous journal, *Le Père Duchesne*. Beginning life as a lackey, Hébert soon left that employment to become chief clerk in the ticket office of a small Parisian theatre, from which position he was dismissed for embezzlement. On the night of August 9th to 10th he emerged from obscurity, and managed to get himself installed, apparently on his own recommendation, as a member of the insurrectionary Commune. His zeal in the prison massacres procured for him the office of Sub-Procureur Syndic of the Municipality of Paris.

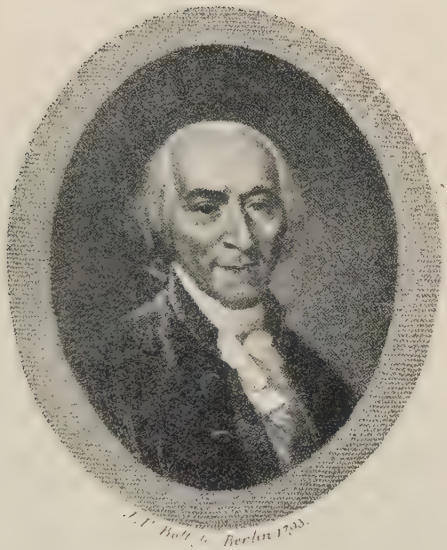
If Marat preached massacre as a painful duty, Hébert extolled murder as an amusing pastime. He was a past master in the art of arousing the basest instincts in the vilest of mankind. Adopting the lurid language of the gutter, freely interlarded with unprintable expletives and filthy analogies, his pages are, nevertheless, not altogether devoid of a certain kind of humour—if, indeed, that can be called humour which results in the violent death of the person against whom it is directed.

Le Père Duchesne, which had an enormous circulation, is a small quarto journal, clumsily printed on rough grey paper. It was published irregularly, and each issue bears a number, but no date, and abounds

in typographical and orthographical mistakes, caused very largely, no doubt, by the demand outstripping the means of supply. Each number bears as a device the figure of a squalid peasant, in a tattered vest and trousers, a round hat, and huge boots, with a pipe stuck in the corner of his mouth. This was the counterfeit presentment of *Le Père Duchesne*—a character obviously modelled on the *Compère Matthieu*, a sagacious but disreputable peasant in the Abbé Du Laurens' famous novel of that name, with whom all were familiar. To the ignorant, it was a life-like portrait of the author; but those who had heard Hébert speak from the tribune of the Jacobin Club knew better. There he was a fair-haired young man, with rather fine blue eyes, and the mildest-looking face in the world, remarkable for the elegance of his dress, the distinction of his manners, and the perfection of his diction. He was an excellent business man, and sold his services to such good purpose that when, scarcely two years later, his turn came to mount the scaffold, he left, according to Mallet du Pan, a fortune of fifty thousand pounds. Yet, what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own life!

In this instance Hébert applied the *argumentum ad hominem* in these terms:

"Says I to myself, The devil, but that Roland chap is going it! He's making up in fine style for the time when he went a-fasting. I must tell you about a little adventure, which will form a pretty chapter in the history of the virtuous Roland when it comes to be written.



ROLAND.

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"The other day a half-dozen good *sans-culottes*, Grémard, administrator of the Department, Moulinet Duplex, member of the Commune, Poussin and Auger, Commissaries of the Section of the République, marched in deputation to the house of Old Shaven-Pate. Damme, if it wasn't grub-time!

"'Vat you vant?' growled the Swiss, stopping them at the door.

"'We want to speak to the virtuous Roland.'

"'Der virtuous is not here,' answered the fat, clean-shaved porter, sticking out his paw, for all the world like an old-time Norman attorney.

"'We ain't going to tip you,' said friend Grémard; 'we've got a free pass, like the *Capucines*. We were sent by the *sans-culottes*, and don't you forget it!'

"At this, the Swiss sneaked back into his box like a snail into his shell after he has shown his horns. We *sans-culottes* filed into the corridor, and soon came to the ante-chamber of the virtuous Roland. You could hardly see anything for flunkeys. Twenty cooks, loaded with dainty fricassées, shouted at the top of their voices. 'Look out, there! here come the entrées of the virtuous Roland!' Others yelled, one after another: 'This is the most delicious dish of the virtuous Roland!' 'This is the second course of the virtuous Roland!' 'Make way for the roast meats of the virtuous Roland!'

"'What do you want?' demanded the virtuous Roland's valet, staring at the deputation.

"'We want to speak to the virtuous Roland.'

"'He can't be seen just now.'

"'Tell him it's his duty to welcome the magistrates of the people at all times.'

"The valet trotted off to give the virtuous Roland our message, and soon after Old Shaven-Pate came out to us, with a napkin on his arm, smacking his chops and looking as sour as the devil.

"'The Republic must certainly be in danger to make me leave my dinner like this,' he mumbled.

"Roland led my bucks through the dining-room, where there were thirty odd spongers tucking in for all they were worth. At the top of the table, to the right of the virtuous Roland, sat Bussatier; to the left, the accuser of Robespierre, that dirty little tyke Louvet, who, with his papier-mâché face and hollow eyes, threw covetous glances on the wife of the virtuous Roland."

Hébert proceeds to relate how one of the members of the deputation, whilst passing through the study in the dark, upset the dessert of the virtuous Roland. On being told of the accident, "the wife of the virtuous Roland, in her rage, tore off her wig."

Meanwhile, the Commissioners demanded to know why the Minister had caused the seals to be removed from the property of the emigrant nobleman Saint-Priest. They afterwards went to their Section to give an account of their exploit, and, above all, of the copious dinner of the virtuous Roland.

It would seem that Hébert, heading a deputation to the Minister, had been treated with the ignominy he deserved, and that he avenged himself, and at the same time served the interests of the Mountain, by this account of one of those dinners, Spartan in

their simplicity, which Madame Roland used to give, twice a week, to a small number of her husband's colleagues in the Convention. From these informal gatherings Louvet was seldom absent, though on these occasions Lodoïska never accompanied him, for Madame Roland was careful, during her husband's Ministry, never to invite women to her *salon* when the political situation was to be discussed. Her faith in the discretion of her sex had evidently its limits. Nor would her sense of what was becoming in a woman ever permit her to join in these conversations, although, as she tells us in her Memoirs, she was often sorely tempted to do so.

Having held up the Rolands and their friends to ridicule, Hébert now attempted to make them odious in the eyes of the rabble by the vilest imputations against the morality of the guests, and against the reputation of the noble woman who presided over the circle.

In these attacks Louvet comes in for a large share of abuse on account of the stinging satires appearing in the *Sentinelle*, in which Hébert was persistently held up to the infamy and contempt of mankind.

CHAPTER XIII

Debate on the King's trial—Views of the Girondists—Policy of the Mountain—Danton's brutal frankness—Louis at the bar of the Convention—Marat's admission—The King's ironical observation to Coulombeau—Salle's motion—Gensonné's sarcasm —The geese of the Capitol—Louvet rebukes Danton—Trial of the King—Scene in the Convention—The voting—Vergniaud declares the result—The death sentence—A king's tragedy—Disunion in the Girondist ranks, and its causes—Strength of the Mountain.

THE Mountain's next bid for power was in the matter of the King's trial. Although the majority of the Girondists sincerely believed that Louis had been guilty of treachery to the nation, they doubted the competence of the Convention to sit in judgment on the dethroned monarch. Yet again they experienced that, in revolutionary times, a tender conscience is a fatal encumbrance. In their anxiety to preserve the forms of the law, they became entangled in a chain of sophistry, which exposed them to a charge of attempting to shield the King. The Mountain, on the other hand, went straight to the mark.

"The Assembly," said Robespierre, with singular boldness, "has involuntarily been led far away from the question at issue. Here we have nothing to do with the trial: Louis is not an accused man; you are, and can be, only statesmen and representatives of the people. You have no sentence to pronounce

for or against a man; you are called upon to adopt a measure of public safety. Louis was King; a republic is now established. The question before you is, therefore, decided by these simple words. Louis cannot be tried, for he is already tried and condemned. The trials of nations are not like those of judicial courts—their sentences are hurled like thunderbolts; they do not condemn kings; they hurl them back into space. This kind of justice is as good as that of ordinary tribunals."

"Our business," said Danton, with brutal frankness, "is not to try the King, but to kill him."

Thus the main question involved was whether the revolutionary *régime* should be indefinitely prolonged, or whether the lead of the Girondists should be followed by reverting to a strictly legal government.

On Tuesday, December 11th, Louis appeared at the bar of the Convention, then under the presidency of Barère. His examination lasted five hours. The quiet dignity of his bearing and the coolness with which he categorically denied the charges made against him, deeply impressed the whole Assembly.

"We owe it to the truth to admit," says Marat, "that in this trying and humiliating position, he bore himself with dignity. He, who had never been addressed by any name but that of Majesty, heard himself called 'Louis Capet' a hundred times without betraying the least sign of irritation; and when he was kept standing, he, in whose presence no man had been allowed to sit, never once showed the least impatience. Had he been innocent, how noble and

sympathetic he would have appeared to me in his humiliation! If only this apathetic calm had been due to the resignation of a wise man to the hard laws of necessity."*

Louis appeared before the Convention for the last time on Wednesday, December 26th. As before, he was driven to the Assembly in the mayoral carriage, accompanied by Chambon, the Mayor, Chaumette, the Procureur, and Coulombeau, Secretary of the Commune, and under the escort of a body of cavalry from the École Militaire. The King was perfectly calm, and during the journey took part in a discussion of the merits of Seneca, Livy, and Tacitus. He paused in the entrance hall to converse with his counsel Malesherbes, Tronchet, and Desèze. Treilhard, a member of the Mountain, and future Director, on his way to the Assembly, overhearing them address the King as "Sire," turned upon them angrily, with the words, "How dare you utter names which the Convention has proscribed?"

"Contempt for you, and contempt for life," promptly answered Malesherbes.

The King was led before the Assembly, when Desèze read his speech for the defence, which lasted three hours. On his way to the carriage, cries of "Death to Louis!" arose on all sides.

During the ride back to the Temple, he remarked with a smile to Coulombeau, who kept his hat on:

"The last time you came you had forgotten your hat; you have been more careful to-day."

* Marat in the *Journal de la République Française* of December 13, 1792.

Salle, one of the oldest of Louvet's political friends, now brought forward his famous motion that the judgment on the King should be referred to the nation as a whole. This proposal was strongly supported by Lanjuinais and other adherents of the Gironde in the tribune; whilst Louvet, who had also intended to speak in its favour, was prevented from doing so by the sudden closure of the discussion. He again had recourse to his printing-press, and his discourse was widely circulated among the people.

During the debates, Gensonné distinguished himself by an attack on Robespierre, Marat, and Anacharsis Clootz:

"It is but too true," said he, "even Liberty has her hypocrisy and her cult, her humbugs and her bigots. Just as there are quacks in the art of healing, so there are charlatans in the science of politics. They may be recognized by their hatred of philosophy and learning, and by their adroitness in flattering the prejudices and passions of those whom they wish to deceive. They boast with effrontery; they speak unceasingly of their zeal, their disinterestedness, and their other rare qualities; they lie impudently; and they draw attention to themselves by seductive titles and extraordinary formulas. One proclaims himself the 'Friend of the People,'* another, the 'incorruptible defender of their rights,'† whilst another invents the 'balm of the universal republic.'‡ But having obtained some success, reflection soon dissipates their prestige; before they reach their goal, they betray

* Marat. † Robespierre.
‡ Anacharsis Clootz.

themselves ; and the people, ashamed of having bee duped, drive out these mountebanks ; or if they allo them still to tread their boards, listen to them onl to laugh at their follies, and respond to their advance only by their contempt."

He divided the Jacobins into two classes, the blin and the overbearing. Let the first reform and com back to the true cause of the people. As for th others, " if they helped to save the body politic, the did so by instinct, like the geese of the Capitol. Bu I have yet to learn that the Roman people, by wa of showing their gratitude to this sort of liberators created them dictators and consuls, or that the made them the supreme arbiters of their destiny."

But the Girondists were soon to pay dearly for thes pleasantries. Years afterwards, the last survivors o the Mountain still remembered with bitterness th immortal sting of Gensonné's sarcasm.

On December 16th, Buzot moved that all member of the Bourbon family, excepting those imprisone in the Temple, should be immediately banished. Thi was furiously opposed by Bourdon and Marat, a it was chiefly aimed at Philippe Égalité, a membe of the Mountain. In support of the proposal, Louvet delivered one of his most brilliant orations. Walking solemnly to the tribune, carrying a volume of Livy in his hand, he began in these words :

" Representatives of the people, it is not I who am about to support Buzot's proposal, it is the immortal founder of a famous republic, it is the father of Roman liberty, Brutus." At this point murmurs arose in the house. " Yes, Brutus," he continued. " I rise on a

From an engraving by Sandoz, after a painting by F. Bonneville.

MARGUERITE ELIE GUADET.

From an engraving by Levachez.

ARMAND GENSONNÉ.

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point of order," cried Bréard. The President having decided in Louvet's favour, "Yes, Brutus," he repeated, "and although his discourse was pronounced nearly two thousand years ago, it is so apposite to our actual situation that we might believe it had been composed this day." He then cited at length the objurgations which Livy makes Brutus address to Tarquinius Collatinus, urging him to submit to voluntary banishment for the good of the Republic. "Really," cried Duhem; "Louvet ought not to crush us under the despotism of his learning!" "There are two hundred petitioners at the bar!" shouted Goupilleau. But the President still ruled that Louvet was in order, and the orator proceeded imperturbably with his parallel between Collatinus and Philippe Égalité.

After a long debate, it was decided on January 14, that the Deputies should vote aloud, in turn, from the tribune, upon the three questions: Is Louis guilty of conspiracy against the nation? Shall the judgment be referred to the people for ratification?—and, What punishment shall be inflicted?

On January 15th, under the presidency of Vergniaud, who had been elected on the 10th of the month, the first question was put to the vote. The result was an almost unanimous verdict of guilty. The voting on the second question lasted throughout the whole of the next day. Out of the seven hundred and seventeen members present, two hundred and eighty-three voted for the appeal to the people, and four hundred and twenty-four declared against it, whilst ten refused to vote. Louvet voted with the minority,

and during the debate crossed swords with Danton. "Thou art not yet king, Danton!" he cried, when that Deputy had spoken without the President's leave. Amongst those who voted against the measure were Condorcet, Isnard, and Boyer-Fonfrède, with many other leading Girondists.

The sitting of January 17th was devoted to the third question: What punishment shall be inflicted?—although the actual voting did not begin until eight o'clock in the evening, and lasted throughout the night and most of the next day. It was difficult to believe that these men were assembled to decide upon a question which involved not only the life of a King, but the welfare of a great nation—one of the gravest questions, in fact, which had ever been submitted to the judgment of a legislative body. The public galleries were crowded with noisy men and women, who constantly interrupted the proceedings by their comments or their threats. In the middle of the hall, a section was divided off into stalls, reserved for the wives and mistresses of the members. These ladies were shown to their seats by the official ushers, and exchanged smiles and greetings with the Deputies as they passed to their places.

Fashion, under the Convention, favoured the low-cut dress. The women in this part of the hall followed the fashion very far. Instead of a fan, each of these ladies held a card, on which she marked off with a pin the votes as they were given aloud from the tribune. From time to time, the Deputies left their seats to chat with their fair friends, or to order refreshments for them; and

throughout the night, waiters were busy running to and fro with all kinds of liqueurs, fruits, and confectionery.

The voting proceeded without hurry, and each member as he ascended the tribune was careful to give the reasons for his decision. When he had recorded his vote, he returned to his seat amid the applause or the abuse of the galleries. In the refreshment room and in the passages, agents of the Jacobin and Cordelier Clubs waylaid undecided members, canvassing for their votes. It is recorded that the threats of these gentlemen sometimes proved more convincing than their logic, and that many a wavering Deputy found conviction on his passage through the lobbies of the house.

At length Vergniaud rose to announce the result of the ballot. There were seven hundred and twenty-one votes taken, of which three hundred and sixty-one were given for death. The minority of three hundred and thirty-four Deputies voted for the King's detention until the establishment of a general peace, when he should be banished for life. Thus Louis' death was decided by a majority of twenty-six votes.

Louvet, after supporting Salle's motion, pronounced for death, but on condition that the sentence should be carried out only when the constitution should be completed and ratified by the people; and he voted for the respite, after taking a leading part in the discussion on that subject. Vergniaud, Guadet, Gensonné, Brissot, Buzot, Barbaroux, and Pétion were among those who voted for death unconditionally; whilst other members of their party, including

Salle, Lanjuinais, Defermon, Rabaut Saint-Étienne, the Protestant pastor, and Sillery, the husband of Madame de Genlis, voted with the minority for detention and banishment. Having announced the result of the scrutiny, the President's voice trembled with emotion, as he said, "In the name of the Convention I declare the punishment to which it condemns Louis Capet to be death."

The King's counsel now appeared at the bar to make a last appeal for the mercy of the Assembly in view of the small majority by which the sentence had been obtained. "Most laws are made by small majorities," said a member of the Mountain. "Laws may be revoked," replied one of Louis' advocates; "but you cannot give back a man's life when once you have taken it."

But his doom was irrevocably pronounced, and on January 21st, Louis mounted the scaffold. There is considerable truth in the following lines on Louis by Comte Alexandre de Tilly:

> "Il ne sut que mourir, aimer et pardonner
> S'il avait su punir, il auroit su régner."

This is one of the world's most moving tragedies. A just man, who, according to his lights, sincerely endeavoured to do his duty by the people he was called upon to govern; of a kind-hearted, tolerant, and pliable disposition, it was his misfortune to be surrounded by evil counsellors, who, on the first approach of danger, left him to face the storm alone. But it is more important to the welfare of a nation that its governors should be strong than that they should be virtuous; and however much we sympathize

with the man, it is difficult to see how the Convention could safely have acted otherwise than by condemning him to death, for a dethroned monarch must ever be a standing menace to a newly-established republic. The story of Louis fills the reader with pity and terror, and oppresses him with that sense of inevitability which is the essence of tragedy.

> "As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;
> They kill us for their sport."

The Girondists have frequently been reproached, even by their warmest advocates, for the want of party discipline revealed in their ranks, at this and other crises of the Revolution. Their disunion has been contrasted with the solid front presented by their opponents, and they have on this account been sometimes hastily condemned as incompetent statesmen. It were idle to deny that the Mountain was a more closely organized political combination than the Gironde, though it is curious to note, in this connection, that at the King's trial some of the members of the former party voted against the death sentence. This, however, is by the way. What I am here concerned with is to seek a reason for this contrast.

In the first place, the Mountain were out of office; and they were united in a steady determination to oust their rivals. There are few more powerful bonds of union than this. Whilst in opposition, they tacitly agreed to forget all minor differences of opinion, for on that condition alone could they hope to attain the one supreme end they had in view. When, a few

months later, they had succeeded in crushing their opponents, their boasted unity at once gave place to the most violent internal dissension. If the Girondists had their Brissotins and their Buzotins, the Mountain had their Dantonists, Robespierrists, Maratists, and Hébertists, each sect following a definite policy of its own.

Moreover, the Girondist party was composed almost entirely of men remarkable for their intellectual attainments. It would be difficult to name a political party of any nation or of any time which contained such a large number of men of genius. The organization of such a party was, necessarily, of the loosest possible description. Each member brought an independent judgment to bear upon every problem as it arose in the Convention, and he was loath to modify his opinion in deference to the will of others: Intellectual freedom is the dearest possession of the philosopher; consequently, he rarely makes a good party man. Hence the extraordinarily divergent opinions which any important debate revealed in the Girondist ranks, and their fatal inclination to temporize. The faculty of seeing every side of a question has it drawbacks. It makes it more difficult for a man to form an opinion. It often, in fact, renders him incapable of coming to any decision at all. Such a mind instinctively arrives at an equilibrium, in which the positive is exactly balanced by the negative. Thus, during the King's trial, several Deputies refused to vote.

Ask an ignorant man the same question, and, provided it be within his comprehension, he will

answer with no hesitation whatever. This is because he sees facts only in their broadest features. His mind draws a sharp distinction between the light and the shade. Incapable of analyzing his impressions, he sees only two roads before him, running in opposite directions. He sometimes chooses the right one. For this reason, sophistry has no hold on a simple mind. As he judges facts, so he divides men into two classes, the good and the bad. With a superb indifference to petty distinctions, he places the sheep on his right hand, the goats on his left. In his philosophy, there are no degrees of goatishness.

The Mountain, like the ignorant man, were content to see only one side of the question. This was the more easy in that their party was very largely composed of ignorant men, who consequently subjected themselves to the will of a masterful minority with less reluctance than would have been possible to the highly cultured men who formed the majority of the rival party. These circumstances gave a unity to the counsels of the Mountain which was wholly lacking in those of the Girondists.

CHAPTER XIV

A war of extermination—*Mot* of Sieyès—The Girondists fast lose ground—Their attempts to recover their popularity—Buzot's opinion of the Sovereign People—Disgraceful scenes in the Convention—Dumouriez complains of the Jacobin agents in Belgium—He arrests two Government commissioners—His disastrous reverses—How Paris received the news—Peculiarities of the Gallic temperament—Cæsar's shrewd observations—Riots in Paris—Mob destroy Girondist printing-presses—The Revolutionary Tribunal—Conspiracy of March 10th foiled by Lodoïska—Her heroism—Louvet warns his colleagues—Pétion's phlegm.

AFTER the momentary diversion created by the King's trial and execution, the rival parties braced themselves for a war of extermination. The Convention became an arena in which their feud was fought out to its bloody end. On the one side was a group of idealists, day by day overwhelming their opponents by the force of their logic, their irony, and their contempt. Bold in council, timid in action, the Girondists swept the House along with them in the impetuous flood of their eloquence; but when the time came to act some hesitated, others absented themselves or refused to vote, whilst all wasted their time in useless talk and argument. In times of revolution it is dangerous to drag your adversary to the brink of the precipice without having the power to hurl him over the side.

"First make sure that you have the cannon on your side," advised Sieyès, the Wise Youth of the Revolution.

Arrayed on the other side was a resolute minority, warned by the threats of their opponents, exasperated by their defeats in the Convention, and, above all, knowing exactly what they wanted and determined at all costs to get it. The Mountain, moreover, had powerful auxiliaries in the Commune and the tribunes, which were perpetually crowded with turbulent bands from the Jacobin and Cordelier Clubs.

Again, the disasters to the army and the scarcity of food inevitably tended to bring the people into opposition to the Government, and the streets of Paris were constantly the scene of riots and seditions of the most threatening character. In their distress at seeing their popularity slipping from them, the Girondists sought to justify themselves. Their explanations were as futile as the tears and reproaches of a woman who ceases to please. So long, however, as they could make themselves heard, they deemed that all was not lost. But the most impassioned eloquence is powerless to revive a dead enthusiasm.

The pictures which the Girondists drew of the Sovereign People at this period are not flattering. "The insolence of these rascals," says Buzot, "is almost incredible. For the past eight months we have had to endure conduct which has at once disgusted and shamed every honest and sensitive soul. Although I knew how necessary it was to be patient, I checked myself a thousand times on the point of blowing out the brains of one or other of these odious wretches. Good God! what deputations! It seemed as though they had ransacked the sewers of Paris and the big towns, and had collected together the

most hideous, the most filthy, and the most infected refuse. They all had ugly faces, of every tint except that of cleanliness, surmounted by shocks of greasy hair, with eyes sunk deep into their heads. With every nauseous breath they exhaled the most scurrilous abuse, interspersed with the sharp cries of beasts of prey. The tribunes were in every way worthy of such legislators. Crime and misery were stamped upon the faces of the men, whilst the lowest debauchery was apparent in the shameless bearing of the women. When the hands, feet and voices of this mob began their racket, you might have thought you had strayed into an assembly of devils."*

The disillusionment, then, was not all on one side; and the Girondists, who had begun by endowing the people with all the virtues, ended by finding them Yahoos, and turned from them in disgust.

Each day the quarrel in the Convention grew more embittered. Calumny met calumny, violence repelled violence. The hall rang with cries of "Liar!" "Scoundrel!" "Conspirator!" "Aristocrat!" "Assassin!" Louvet declared he would go to the sittings armed with a blunderbuss. Others brought sword-sticks, pistols, and loaded canes. Marat carried a huge cavalry sword. Bourdon de l'Oise struck Chambon, and called him out; whilst that hot-headed apostle, Rebecqui of Marseilles, in his yearning to reclaim a wandering sheep, seized him by the throat with such violence that he was almost rendered incapable of ever again straying from the fold. On one occasion Marat left his seat,

* Buzot (F.N.L.,) *Mémoires;* edited by C. A. Dauban, p. 57.

foaming at the mouth, and ran down the hall yelling, "Silence, you wretches! Let the patriots speak!" "Hold your noise, you thief!" he shouted to one member; and to another: "Silence, you traitor!"

Meanwhile, Dumouriez, whose great victory at Jemappes in the previous November had laid Belgium at the feet of the Republic, complained bitterly of the rapacity and lawlessness of the Jacobin agents who had been sent in the wake of his victorious army to propagate Revolutionary principles and to establish clubs after the pattern of the mother society. They had taken possession of the valuable church ornaments, sequestrated the revenues of the clergy, confiscated the property of the nobles, and had, in short, brought odium on the Government in every possible way. Unless, he asserted, the Convention abandoned this harsh policy and adopted more conciliatory measures, the conquered people would inevitably revolt against the French occupation. Finding that his protests were disregarded, he came to Paris at the time of the King's trial, to see what his personal influence could do towards redressing the grievances, which were fast alienating the sympathy of the Belgians from the Revolutionary cause.

He succeeded only in arousing the hatred of the ultra-Jacobins; and he returned to his army determined at the first opportunity of putting down the factions by force of arms. On reaching Belgium, he restored part of the property taken from the churches, and issued a proclamation in the name of the Republic repudiating all the vexatious acts

committed by the Jacobin agents, whom he designated as brigands. He then arrested two of the Government Commissioners and sent them back to Paris under an armed escort. These measures succeeded in attaching the Belgians to him. Lastly, when the Government sent a special deputation to him for an explanation of his conduct, he openly set them at naught, and expressed with much vigour his hearty contempt for the Convention and all its works.

But at this moment his army met with a series of disastrous reverses. The Austrians drove General Valence from Aix-la-Chapelle; Miranda was forced to raise the siege of Maestricht; and Dumouriez himself was in consequence compelled to abandon his invasion of Holland.

The Frenchman is not a good sportsman. He takes a beating badly. Indeed, it has always been his nature to do so. In times of crisis he is apt to betray a certain moral instability. As the temper of the Gauls, says Cæsar, is ardent and sanguine in undertaking wars, so is their spirit soft and unstable in enduring misfortunes.* At such moments a Frenchman will readily suspect his best friend of betraying him; forgetting that, when men pass from thought to action, they are obliged to place confidence in somebody. Moreover, from his first appearance in history, credulity and suspicion have been distinctive traits of his character. Hence his peculiar susceptibility to panic, which has been such an important factor in determining his destiny. Nothing

* *Cæsar's Commentaries on the Gallic War*, bk. iii., ch. 19.

escaped the attention of the Roman General, and he knew the peculiarities of the Gauls, as he knew those of his favourite Tenth Legion. After remarking on their fickleness and love of change, he tells how it was their habit to stop travellers and merchants, and compel them to declare what country they came from and to tell what news they had learned there. Under the influence of such vague information, they frequently embarked on enterprises of the highest importance, of which, adds Cæsar, they must constantly repent; for, since they are notoriously the slaves of uncertain rumours, most people give them false answers adapted to their wishes.*

When the news of Dumouriez' reverses reached Paris, the cry of treachery was immediately raised by the Jacobins, and again their fables were accepted by the credulous populace. The Jacobins, also, knew the national weakness, and acted upon it, as Cæsar had done before them. They found it easy to turn the popular suspicion against the Girondists, and the latter were openly accused of aiding and abetting the traitor Dumouriez.

A riot took place, during which the mob, led by the most turbulent demagogues, broke into the offices of several of the leading Girondist newspapers and destroyed the printing-presses. The tumult was eventually put down without bloodshed by Beurnonville, the Minister of War. But more serious disturbances occurred on the following day. Indeed, there is little doubt that an organized conspiracy existed to

* *Cæsar's Commentaries on the Gallic War*, bk. iv., ch. 5.

do away with the leading Girondist Deputies. For some weeks past their lives had been in peril. Again and again Marat had covertly threatened them; whilst the bloody-minded jests of Hébert openly pointed them out to the dagger of the assassin. They seldom ventured out alone, and were always under arms. Their nights were passed away from home. Louvet and Lodoïska often found shelter at the house of Mme. Goussard, wife of the Directeur de la Comptabilité Commerciale, a very old friend of theirs, as also of the Brissots, the Rolands, and the Pétions. This lady soon after risked her life in facilitating the escape of Louvet and Pétion from Paris.

In order to be near the Convention, Louvet had recently taken rooms in the Rue Saint-Honoré, a short distance above the hall of the Jacobin Club. In this modest home, on the evening of March 10th, Lodoïska anxiously awaited Louvet's return from the Assembly, which was then sitting permanently. She had needed all her courage to carry her through the day, for the Convention had just decreed the establishment of an extraordinary tribunal for trying without appeal all conspirators and counter-revolutionaries. Suspecting that such a measure was partly aimed at themselves, many of the Girondists had strenuously combated the proposal.

"I would rather die," cried Vergniaud, "than consent to the establishment of an inquisition a thousand times more terrible than that of Venice!"

And Lanjuinais suggested that, if they were determined to sanction such an iniquity, they ought at least to limit the calamity to the

Department of Paris. After a fierce debate, which had exhausted the strength of all present, it was proposed to adjourn the sitting for an hour. This brought Danton to his feet. "What!" he exclaimed, "is it at the moment that Miranda is beaten, and Dumouriez, taken in the rear, may be obliged to lay down his arms, that you think of deserting your posts? Let us rather complete the enactment of these extraordinary laws destined to overawe our internal enemies. They must be arbitrary, because it is impossible to render them precise; and terrible though they be, they will be preferable to the popular executions, which now, as in September, would be the consequence of the delay of justice. After establishing this tribunal, you must organize an energetic executive power, which shall be in close co-operation with you and have power to raise both men and money. To-day, then, the extraordinary tribunal, to-morrow the executive power, and the next day the departure of your commissioners to the Departments. Let who will calumniate me. Let my name be blotted out and my memory perish, if only France may be free!"

It was ultimately decided to raise a levy of three hundred thousand recruits, and to establish the tribunal forthwith. Thus, like a second Minerva, the chief instrument of the Terror sprang, fully armed, from the brain of another Jupiter enthroned on the revolutionary Olympus.

Mme. Suard, whose *salon* afterwards became famous, asked one of her friends what he thought of the newly-established tribunal.

"What do I think of it?" he replied. "Why, I dare scarcely hold my tongue!"

When the Lion of the Mountain raised his terrible voice, passions ran high. All this Lodoïska knew as she sat that night waiting in her little room, and she trembled for Louvet's safety. Suddenly a deafening uproar, mingled with hoarse cries and the tramp of many feet, arose in the street below. She had lived long enough in the heart of the Revolution to know that those sounds boded no good. She ran to the window and looked out. An angry crowd of men and women surged around the entrance of the Jacobin Club. The clock struck nine as Lodoïska dashed downstairs and forced her way through the seething mob. From an obscure corner of the gallery she watched the proceedings. She carried her life in her hands. Had she been recognized, she had small mercy to expect from the fury of those around her. The age of chivalry was dead. Bentabole, a creature of Marat's, first rose to read a report on the morning's sitting of the Convention. When he had concluded, a column of volunteers, armed with swords and pistols, asked to be allowed to parade through the hall. Having obtained the President's consent, they filed before the Assembly amid enthusiastic applause.

"Citizens," cried one of them, "at the moment when the country is in danger, the conquerors of the 10th of August are rising to exterminate her enemies abroad and at home."

"Yes," replied Collot d'Herbois, the President; "and in spite of the intriguers we will unite with you to preserve our freedom."

"Let us arrest the traitors in their houses!" cried Desfieux, after denouncing the leading Girondists by name.

"No, no!" shouted a soldier. "Arrest is not sufficient: the people must have vengeance! What do we care for the inviolability of the national representatives! I trample it under foot."

At this point, Dubois-Crancé, a member of the Mountain, who had just arrived, opposed these drastic measures and counselled moderation. His speech occasioned a frightful commotion. It was at last decided that those present should divide into two bands, one of which should go to the Cordelier Club for reinforcements, whilst the other proceeded to the Convention to demand that the unpopular Deputies should be handed over to them. Then the rabble swarmed over the partitions of the galleries into the body of the hall. Swords were drawn; the lights were suddenly extinguished, and the two bands set out, amid cries of "Down with the Girondists!" "Death to the traitors!"

In the tumult Lodoïska slipped out unobserved and joined the crowd marching towards the Cordelier Club; and, watching her opportunity, broke from them and made her way home. Louvet had already returned. He immediately snatched up a sword and flew to Pétion's, where he found several of his friends assembled, calmly discussing the proposals about to be submitted to the Convention, as was their wont.

"God alone knows," says Louvet, "what difficulty I had to arouse them to a sense of their danger."

At length, he persuaded them to absent themselves temporarily from the Assembly, and to meet again that night at a retired place, where they would be safe from attack. He then hastened to the Convention to give the alarm, and most of the threatened members left. Kervélégan, the Deputy for Finistère, rushed off to the barracks of the Brest battalion of loyal volunteers and called them to arms. They immediately marched off with him to defend the national representatives. Meanwhile, Louvet ran from door to door, braving a thousand dangers, to warn his colleagues. Two hours later he repaired, thoroughly exhausted, to the meeting-place agreed upon. Valazé, Buzot, Brissot, Vergniaud, Barbaroux and Salle were already there; whilst Beurnonville had posted himself at the door with a patrol of volunteers. Pétion was missing. Knowing the peril he was in if he remained at home, Louvet set out for his house, and earnestly entreated him to leave. But the stolid Pétion was not to be moved.

"It is raining," said he, throwing open the window; "they won't do anything to-night."

Pétion was right. There is nothing like a rainstorm to damp the spirits of the riotous. Of the two columns that had set out, only a handful of the more resolute marched to the Convention, to find that the birds had already flown. When he had assured himself that the insurrection had failed, the Mayor prudently reported the matter to the Assembly.

Thus, the conspiracy of the 10th of March was foiled by the heroic devotion of a woman. Lodoïska had

proved herself to be one of those rare women whose natural place in the hour of danger is at the side of the men they love. Is it to be wondered at that Louvet sometimes becomes lyrical, not to say tiresome, as he sings the eternal praise of Lodoïska in his beautiful French prose ?

CHAPTER XV

Vergniaud denounces the conspiracy—His eloquence—Louvet's dissatisfaction—Vergniaud's strange reply—Louvet discusses the situation with Lodoïska—He publishes another pamphlet—The Committee of Public Safety—Treason of Dumouriez—Danton attempts to conciliate the Girondists—They reject his overtures—His furious outburst—First attack on the Girondists from without—Robespierre follows up the attack—Vergniaud's crushing rejoinder.

THE threatened Deputies entrusted the formal denunciation of the conspiracy to Vergniaud. Had Louvet known how the great orator would acquit himself of his task, he would have strenuously opposed his selection. Vergniaud mounted the tribune on the 13th of the month. His speech is a sublime piece of oratory; like a noble river it rolls majestically onwards, but beneath the placid surface there is an irresistible force—the speaker's passionate love of his country. Applied to the leaders of the Revolution, this is no empty figure of speech, but a genuine and living emotion. To Vergniaud, France is a beloved mistress turning to his manhood for help in her hour of need. She claimed his heart's blood. He was soon to give it, and to glory in the sacrifice. It was good to die for such a country! It would have been better still to have lived for her. As we read the oration to-day, we understand the devotion of the man's friends: we wonder how he came to have enemies.

"We are marching," said he, "from crimes to amnesties, and from amnesties to crimes. A great many citizens have now come to confound these ever-recurring seditions with the grand march of liberty; to mistake the violence of brigands for the efforts of energetic minds, and to regard even robbery and destruction as necessary to public safety. . . .

"On this account, citizens, there is reason to fear that the Revolution, like Saturn, will devour all her children, and end by giving birth to despots. . . .

"In ancient times, there was a tyrant who had all his victims laid on an iron bed and, by mutilating the tall ones and dislocating the short ones, succeeded in making them all of one uniform size. Citizens, that tyrant was also a lover of equality; and it is this kind of equality which is so often imposed upon us. . . .

"If our principles are so slow of propagation among the nations of the earth, it is because their radiance is obscured by the blood-stained veil of anarchy and sedition. When our ancestors first fell on their knees to worship the sun, do you think that it was obscured by the clouds of a gathering storm. No; we cannot doubt that it shone forth from the immensity of space resplendent with undimmed glory to spread light and fruitfulness over the whole world."

He concluded by demanding a decree of accusation against Fournier, Desfieux, and Lazowski, the leaders of the insurrection.

Unfortunately, Vergniaud directed his denunciation to the wrong address. Instead of frankly accusing the Jacobins of aiding and abetting the conspiracy,

he denounced it as the work of the aristocrats. The Mountain asked nothing better. They were loud in their praise of Vergniaud's eloquence. Even Marat grinned approval, and seconded the motion for arresting the leading rioters. The Minister of Justice was ordered to make a strict inquiry into the matter and to report to the Convention. He carried out his directions in the most perfunctory manner, and declared that he could find no trace of the alleged Committee of Insurrection.

Vergniaud's complaisance to the Mountain had filled Louvet with astonishment. He drew the great orator aside, and asked him the reason of his strange conduct. Vergniaud answered that he deemed it impolitic to name the real conspirators lest he should still more exasperate men who were already too prone to be carried away by their violent passions. In vain Louvet pointed out that such squeamishness was lost on their opponents and served only to prepare their own ruin. He turned homewards with a heavy heart. "These men," said he to his faithful Lodoïska, "are rushing blindly on death; if it were not that they are the only representatives of virtue and duty, it would be necessary to break with them at once."

Nevertheless, a few of the Girondists saw that Vergniaud had led them into a false position, and how the error had been turned to the profit of their enemies; and they earnestly begged Louvet to do what he could to remedy the evil. But when he rose to speak the Convention refused to hear him. He therefore promptly wrote a pamphlet, entitled "*À la Convention nationale et à mes Commettans sur la Con-*

spiration du 10 *Mars et la faction d'Orléans.*" An edition of six thousand copies was distributed in Paris, and the brochure was reprinted in several of the Departments.

It is an exceedingly able attack on Garat, the Minister of Justice, and on those members of the Mountain who, although fully aware of the conspiracy, failed to report it to the Convention. The opening repels the charge of Girondist intrigues with Dumouriez, and proves that Danton, Lacroix, and their associates had far more intimate relations with the suspected General than ever the Girondists had. As usual, they had anticipated the treason of Dumouriez, for the news of his defection did not reach them until some days later. Louvet then passed to an account of the inner history of the insurrection. Throughout the speech there is that strange insistence on a certain phrase, the constant repetition of a fixed order of words, which in Louvet's oratory always makes such a profound impression. Just as every paragraph in the exordium of his famous attack on Robespierre began with the terrible words, "*Je t'accuse,*" so in his indictment of Garat he repeats at the end of each accusation the words, "Yet the Minister of Justice cannot find a trace of the Committee of Insurrection!"

In this brochure Louvet made good use of Lodoïska's report of the famous meeting of the Jacobin Club. He regarded this work, which is exceedingly rare, as his political testament. It was the last of his writings as a member of the Convention.

On March 26th, the nominations for the new

Committee of Public Safety were made. Of the twenty-four members, nine only were Girondists. The party was rapidly losing power. At the same time the Revolutionary Tribunal began its operations; domiciliary visits were ordered to be made, and no person was safe from arrest who was unable to produce a certificate of citizenship upon demand. In order to facilitate the arrest of suspected persons the Convention decreed that all landlords and householders should post up outside their houses a list of all residents therein, with their names, ages and occupations.

At this period, the Convention was possessed by a feverish energy, and the members scarcely allowed themselves time for food and sleep. On the receipt of official information as to the treason of Dumouriez, he was summoned to the bar, and five members were commissioned to proceed to his army with power to suspend or arrest any of the generals, officers, or men, besides suspected functionaries and ordinary citizens. On the following day (March 31st), Chaumette formally demanded the impeachment of Dumouriez. The Convention ordered his address to be printed and sent to all the Republican armies in the field.

For some time Danton had shown little inclination to join his party in their attacks on the Girondists. Meillan, one of their number, at this period, once met him at the Committee of Public Safety, and, speaking to him in a friendly way, assured him how different were the feelings which the Girondists had for him from those they entertained for Robespierre. He

frankly expressed their admiration of his splendid abilities and his fertile and energetic mind, and concluded by saying that he might play the very greatest part, if only he would employ his power to good purpose and to the welfare of the Republic. Deeply impressed by these words, Danton looked up quickly, and in a voice shaken by emotion, said, "You Girondists have no confidence in me." Meillan vainly sought to undeceive him. "No, no," replied Danton, "you have no confidence in me," and he cut the conversation short by moving slowly away.

There is little doubt that Danton would gladly have joined hands with the Girondists had he met with the least encouragement on their part. But they never forgave him his attitude during the prison massacres, and thus, by scruples which were as honourable as they were imprudent, they drove him into the arms of Robespierre and Marat, whom he despised. In this they were no doubt largely influenced by Madame Roland, who from the first had entertained a mortal antipathy towards the great demagogue—the antipathy of a refined and cultivated woman for the gross language and frank brutality of an untutored barbarian. This was also the opinion of Dumouriez.

"One man alone," said he, in his memoirs, "could have saved the Girondists, but they completely alienated him, although Dumouriez" (the General had the pleasant trick of speaking of himself in the third person) "had counselled them to keep fair with him. This man was Danton. To a hideous face, a harsh and violent heart, much ignorance and coarseness, he united great natural ability and an

exceedingly energetic character. If the Girondists had possessed common sense enough to have coalesced with him, he would have humbled the atrocious faction of Marat, and either tamed or annihilated the Jacobins . . . . but the Girondists provoked him, and he sacrificed everything to his vengeance."

It was Lasource who destroyed all hope of reconciliation. He openly accused Danton and Lacroix, in the Convention, of connivance in the treason of Dumouriez. Trembling with passion and with his face convulsed with fury, Danton rushed to the tribune. He demanded that the special commission appointed to inquire into the conspiracy of Dumouriez should also take proceedings against those who had plotted against the indivisibility of the Republic and those who had attempted to save the King and to ruin liberty.

" No more peace or truce," he thundered, " between you and us. I have entrenched myself in the citadel of reason. I will sally out with the cannon of truth, and I will grind to powder the villains who have dared to accuse me." That awful voice must have struck terror to the hearts of the bravest.

It was at once decreed that the existing Committee of Public Safety should be replaced by a new committee of the same name (composed of only nine members), which should have supreme executive power. The elected members all belonged to the Mountain.

Two days later, on April 8th, the Convention admitted to its bar a deputation from the Section of Bon Conseil, demanding the arrest of Brissot,

From an engraving by Levachez.

Designed and engraved by Duplessis Berteaux.

DANTON.

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Vergniaud, Guadet, Gensonné, Louvet, Barbaroux, Buzot, and other Girondists. Instead of punishing this outrage as an act of rebellion against the sovereignty of the people, the Convention, by an ill-advised and untimely application of the principles of individual liberty, and a squeamish regard for the rights of persons, permitted the evil, and took no measures to arrest its progress, until it had acquired such strength as made every effort against it ineffectual. Amid the applause of the tribunes and the extreme left, the petitioners were awarded the honours of the sitting. Such was the first attack made from without upon the Girondists in their last refuge, the bosom of the Convention.

This success was immediately followed up by Robespierre.

"A powerful faction," said he, "is conspiring with the tyrants of Europe to give us a king and an aristocratic constitution; it hopes to attain its shameful desire by force of foreign arms and an insurrection in the Departments. These views are pleasing to the aristocrats of the middle classes, who entertain a horror of equality and are in constant fear for their property. I demand that all members of the Orléans family be brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, together with Sillery and his wife,* Valence, and all those intimately connected with this house; and, further, that the Tribunal be directed to institute proceedings against all the other accomplices of Dumouriez. Dare I name such patriots as Brissot, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Guadet?"

* Known to later generations as Madame de Genlis.

At these words, Vergniaud sprang to his feet.

"I will venture to reply to Monsieur Robespierre," he cried, "who, by a perfidious romance concocted in the silence of his study, has provoked fresh discords in the bosom of the Assembly. I will venture to reply to him without preparation; I have no need, as he has, to call in the aid of art: my soul suffices me."

He then proceeded in a masterly manner to tear in pieces the web of suspicion which Robespierre had skilfully woven around him and his friends. During the course of his long speech, he was constantly annoyed by the interruptions of Panis, a furious demagogue.*

When he came to deal with Robespierre's accusation that the Committee of General Defence had failed to do its duty, Vergniaud pointed out that Robespierre was himself a member of that Committee, though he seldom attended its meetings, on the plea that he had no time.

"Is it just," asked Vergniaud, "that members who by their negligence left to us all the work of the Committee, should accuse us of usurping the power of that Committee?"

At this point, Panis again broke in:

"We did not wish to attend a Committee full of conspirators."

"I have only one word to say to Panis," and Vergniaud quietly turned to his enemy, "let him present his accounts."

The whole Convention joined in the laugh. It was

* Yet his favourite book was Virgil, in the original, if you please.

a nasty homethrust, for there was more than a suspicion that Panis had profited by his position as administrator of police, in August and September, 1792, to make a considerable fortune. The orator thereupon resumed his speech, and was no longer troubled by interruptions.

"The patriotism of some men," continued Vergniaud, "seems to consist in tormenting their fellows, and in plunging them into misery. If I had had my way, patriotism should have made all men happy. The Convention is the centre around which all citizens should rally. I am afraid they sometimes turn in this direction with fear and trembling. I should have wished it to be the centre of all our affection and all our hope. You have sought to consummate the Revolution by terror. I should have wished to consummate it by love. I little thought that, as the savage ministers of the Inquisition spoke of the God of Mercy only when surrounded by their victims burning at the stake, you also would call upon the sacred name of Liberty only from the midst of daggers and assassins."

Vergniaud's words made a profound impression on the Assembly, and when he had finished loud applause broke out on all sides. But the quarrel had gone too far, the wounds which the rival parties had inflicted on each other were too deep, to be healed by the balm of noble thoughts, however nobly expressed.

CHAPTER XVI

A quarrel—Guadet—Impeachment of Marat—His acquittal—Commune demands expulsion of the Girondist leaders—Masuyer's jest, and what it cost him—Commune levies a forced loan—Second plot to murder the Girondist leaders—They order the arrest of Hébert and his associates—The Commune demands their release—Isnard's famous rebuke—Hérault de Séchelles—Release of prisoners—Insurrection of May 31st—Louvet and his friends in hiding—They proceed armed to the Convention—Guadet apostrophises Danton—A stormy sitting—The Convention is coerced by the mob—Temporary failure of the insurrection.

"I DEMAND the punishment of all traitors and conspirators," cried Pétion on April 12th, in moving a vote of censure against the reader of an inflammatory report.

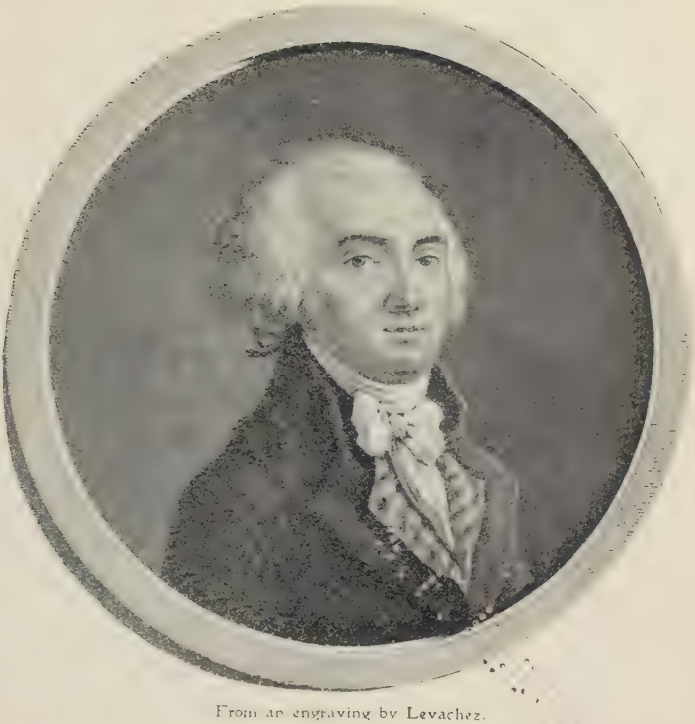
"And their accomplices," interrupted Robespierre.

"Yes," agreed Pétion, "and against you as one of their number. It is time to put a stop to this infamy. It is time that all traitors and conspirators were brought to the scaffold, and I will take upon myself to denounce them."

"Give us facts," sneered Robespierre.

"Good! I will deal with you first."

The partisans of Robespierre here raised indignant protests, and for long there was a terrible commotion. At length a tall, thin man, with a sallow complexion, aggressive black eyes and a sarcastic mouth, made his way into the tribune. It was Guadet. The Mountain always felt uncomfortable when he was on



From an engraving by Levachez.

Designed and engraved by Duplessis Berteaux.

JÉRÔME PÉTION.

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his feet, for he had many of the gifts of a great satirist. He was impetuous, a master of fiery eloquence, but even in the most heated debates he never lost control of his temper, whilst he had a rare skill in arousing the nervous irritability of his opponents. His great strength lay in a power of laying bare hidden motives, of revealing moral cowardice masquerading as worldly wisdom, and of tearing the veil from the secret vanities and infirmities which lurked almost unsuspected in the souls of his enemies.

Guadet concluded one of his ablest and most rancorous speeches by reading aloud from the tribune an address, signed by Marat, exhorting the people to rise in arms against the Convention, as a centre of counter-revolution. The stroke was a clever one. For when the matter was thus formally brought before the Assembly, even Marat's own party were forced to make some show of condemning such flagrant audacity. Several Mountaineers, therefore, joined the Girondists in passing a decree formally impeaching Marat, and ordered him to come up for trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal. It was impossible for the Girondists to allow Marat's atrocious threats and calumnies to pass in silence ; yet this attempt to bring him to book served but to hurry on their destruction. The result of the trial was a foregone conclusion. Marat was accompanied to the Tribunal by a howling multitude of ragged men and slatternly women, who were prepared to tear judges and jurymen limb from limb if they should be so ill-advised as to condemn the popular idol.

" Citizens," said he, scowling at his judges, who

trembled in their shoes, "it is not a criminal who appears before you: it is the apostle and martyr of liberty, against whom a faction of notorious intriguers have obtained a decree of accusation."

After this, of course, there was nothing to be said. If, in his wisdom, Citizen Marat gave it as his opinion that he ought to be acquitted, was it for such as they to gainsay him? Heaven forbid! Judges and jurymen alike felt it a privilege to be of Citizen Marat's opinion, and he was forthwith acquitted. Many a man, I imagine, who played a part in that delicate transaction anxiously awaited the next day's issue of the *Ami du Peuple*, and trembled lest he should find his name upon the fatal list of the suspected.

On the announcement of his acquittal the court rang with frenzied applause. Marat was then crowned with a wreath of oak-leaves, and the mob of men and women thronged around him to pay eager homage to the victorious Friend of the People. Unhappily the hero was a stunted, twisted little man, so that only those in his immediate vicinity succeeded in catching a glimpse of him. Thereupon, two stalwart fellows seized on the arm-chair of one of the judges, and placing Marat in it, bore him shoulder high towards the Convention. During the whole route the procession was followed by frantic cries of "*Vive Marat!*" "*Vive le Peuple!*" "*Vive la République!*" The women of the Halles simply buried their hero in flowers, so that when he arrived at the Assembly he was quite exhausted. Still seated on his chair, with the wreath upon his brow, he was carried into the hall. His colleagues of the

Mountain deemed it expedient to give him a welcome which made up in effusiveness for what it lacked in sincerity, for they felt a thousand threatening eyes upon them, jealous for the honour of the hero. The mob then swarmed into the body of the hall, drove many of the Deputies from their seats, and lifting Marat into the tribune, begged him to address them. It was some moments before he could recover his breath sufficiently to comply with this request. But at length, standing on tiptoe so that his head was just visible above the tribune, he said :

" Legislators, I appear before you as a man who has been basely accused, but whose innocence has been established by a legal acquittal. I offer you a pure heart, and I shall continue to defend the rights of the individual, the citizen, and the people with all the energy of which I am capable."

These words were received with almost delirious enthusiasm, and the sitting ended with a triumphal march of the invading mob through the hall of the Convention.

The popularity of Marat now became greater than ever. Much as he desired the downfall of the Gironde, the issue was not yet sufficiently assured for the timid Robespierre to declare himself openly in favour of a forcible purification of the Assembly ; whilst Danton, from more honourable motives, was also opposed to an open violation of the national representation. Marat, therefore, became the recognized head of the movement against the Girondist Deputies. The designs of the conspirators were no longer disguised, and Marat presided at the meetings of Sections

where resolutions were passed declaring that the Convention was rotten to the core and a danger to the Republic unless it were speedily subjected to a drastic purification. The Commune, the Jacobin Club, and thirty-five of the forty-eight Sections of Paris adopted these resolutions. The Commune declared itself in a permanent state of insurrection, and formally demanded the expulsion of twenty-two of the leading Girondist members. This petition, which was prepared at a meeting of delegates of the various Revolutionary Committees sitting at the Hôtel de Ville, and signed by Pache the Mayor, was read before the Convention on April 15th by Rousselin.

The proscribed Deputies were Brissot, Vergniaud, Louvet, Guadet, Gensonné, Grangeneuve, Buzot, Barbaroux, Pétion, Salle, Lanjuinais, Valady, Chambon, Lanthenas, Valazé, Gorsas, Fauchet, Lasource, Hardy, Birotteau, Doulcet and Lehardy. Immediately the names were read out Boyer-Fonfrède rose with the words: "If it were not that modesty is a duty in a public man, I should consider it an insult that my name has been omitted from the list of honour which has just been laid before you." Thereupon, the members, with the exception of about ninety of the Mountaineers, sprang to their feet and shouted: "Put us all down!"

As Pache left the bar to return to his seat, Masuyer said to him: "Do you not think you could find a little room for me upon your list? There would be a hundred crowns for yourself, you know." Masuyer afterwards paid for his little joke with his life.

Amid the ferocious threats of the Mountain and the yelling of the mob in the galleries, Vergniaud now rose to move that the petition be declared calumnious, and his eloquence snatched victory from the opportunists who held the balance between the rival parties and were known as the Plain. Towards midnight the majority of the Girondists left the house, and in their absence the petitioners, on the motion of the younger Robespierre, were awarded the honours of the sitting.

The Commune now usurped all the powers of sovereignty. It imposed a forced loan on the rich, drew up lists of suspected persons to be imprisoned, and raised an army of *sans-culottes*, armed with pikes and muskets at the expense of the victims of its tyranny. Meanwhile, the Central Committee of Insurrection, which, since March 31st, had held regular meetings at the old Episcopal Palace, was steadily perfecting a fresh plan for the overthrow of the Girondists. This assembly now styled itself the Central Committee of Public Safety, and from the time of Marat's acquittal rapidly superseded the Council-General of the Commune as the centre of the movement against the Convention. The leaders of this seditious assembly were Dobsent, Varlet and Dufourny, the damned souls of Marat and Hébert.

The Commune made but a feeble resistance to the imperious demands of these men; and when Pache was summoned to the bar of the Convention to give an account of the meetings of the Revolutionary Committees, which had met under his presidency at the Hôtel de Ville, he had the audacity to confirm

Garat's statement as to the falsity of the rumoured plot against the national representation.

But in spite of these treacherous assurances a plan was formed to arrest the twenty-two Deputies as they left the Assembly on the night of May 20th to 21st, when it was proposed to take them to an isolated house, specially engaged for the purpose, situated in the Faubourg Montmartre. Each victim as he arrived was then to be pushed into an inner room, where hired assassins were stationed to murder him. The corpse was then to be passed out and buried in a great hole which had already been dug in the adjoining garden. On the morrow it was to be publicly announced that the missing Deputies had emigrated; and, at the same time, a traitorous correspondence with Cobourg, forged for the occasion and bearing the signatures of the victims, was to be discovered and made public. It was not enough to murder them, they must also be calumniated. But this time the plot miscarried, and some of the incriminating documents, signed by Pache and other ringleaders, fell into the hands of the Girondists Bergoeing and Rabaut Saint-Étienne.

Guadet denounced these conspiracies in the Convention, and proposed that the Commune of Paris should be abolished and a new municipality appointed in its stead, and that the substitute members of the Convention, whom it was customary to elect at the same time as the regular Deputies, to supply vacancies as they occurred, should, if necessary, be convened to form a fresh National Assembly, holding its sittings at Bourges. This drastic measure was strenuously

opposed by the Mountain, supported by the Plain, and on the motion of Barère, it was ultimately decided to appoint a committee of twelve members to inquire into the conduct of the Commune and to present a report on the alleged plots against members of the Convention. The new committee, which was composed almost entirely of Girondists, was appointed on May 20th, and at once began operations by ordering the arrest of Michel and Marino, two administrators of police, who had taken a conspicuous part in the seditious assemblies at the Episcopal Palace and at the Hôtel de Ville, and by sending Hébert, the Deputy Procureur de la Commune, to the Abbaye Prison for the publication of an article in his paper, the *Père Duchesne*, accusing the Girondists of attempting to stir up a Departmental war against Paris.

On May 25th a deputation from the Council-General of the Commune waited on the Convention to protest against the arrest of Hébert and his associates, and demanded in the most peremptory terms their instant release. They were sternly rebuked by Isnard, who presided at the sitting.

"France," said he, "has made this Assembly the centre of its national representation, and if ever you raise sacrilegious hands against that representation, I solemnly declare to you, in the name of the whole country, that Paris shall be utterly destroyed, and travellers shall ask on which side of the Seine the famous city stood."

This speech so exasperated the Mountain and the people in the galleries, that Isnard was compelled to

retire from the presidency. He was succeeded by Hérault de Séchelles, a man of noble birth and a famous beau, who in the early days of the Revolution had surprised his elegant friends by suddenly throwing up a high official post and embracing the opinions of the extreme democratic party. Hérault replied to the petitioners with exemplary docility. At a late hour the same night it was decreed that the patriots imprisoned by order of the Committee of Twelve should be released, and that the Committee itself should be abolished. This decree was obtained when most of the Girondists had left the house.

On the following day the Girondists at once revoked the decree of the preceding night, and reinstated the Committee of Twelve. This action raised a fearful commotion, and their enemies resolved on a fresh insurrection, with the avowed object of overthrowing what they were pleased to call the tyranny of the Committee, whose activity they had cause to dread, but with the ulterior design of encompassing the destruction of the Girondists. May 31st was fixed for the execution of their plans. Delegates of thirty-three of the Sections of Paris, in conjunction with the Central Committee of Public Safety, held a secret meeting at the Episcopal Palace to appoint a Commission of nine members to carry out all the measures agreed upon; these men were the creatures of Marat and Hébert. This Committee claimed to have been endowed with plenary powers by the will of the sovereign people. It declared Paris to be in a state of insurrection, ordered the tocsin to be rung and the barriers to be closed; it then caused the Mayor and

the entire Council-General of the Commune to abdicate their functions, and upon their submission immediately reinstated them. In future the Commission of Nine held its meetings at the Hôtel de Ville. The insurrectionary Commune now remembered the distinguished services of Henriot, commandant of the battalion of the Sans-culotte Section, during the September prison massacres, to reward them by appointing him commander-in-chief of the National Guard, in succession to Santerre, who had recently been ordered to La Vendée. It was also decreed that forty sous a day should be paid to all patriots serving in the ranks.

On the night of May 30-31 the outlook was so threatening that Louvet and five of his friends again deemed it prudent to sleep away from home. In a remote quarter of the town they found a room with only three beds, but well situated from a defensive point of view in case of attack, where they decided to pass the night. Louvet's companions were Buzot, Barbaroux, Guadet, Bergoeing, and Rabaut Saint-Étienne. They were awakened at three o'clock in the morning by the sound of the tocsin. At six o'clock, after arming themselves with swords and pistols, they cautiously ventured out into the street and made their way to the Convention. Near the Tuileries (where, since the 10th of the month, the Assembly held its sittings) they were recognized by a mob of *sans-culottes*, who made a show of attacking them; but on seeing their arms they thought better of it and made off. During the journey across Paris,

Rabaut Saint-Étienne was greatly agitated, and at intervals repeated the words, "*Illa suprema dies!*" But his time was not yet come, though Louvet never saw him again.

On entering the hall, they found three members of the Mountain there before them. Turning to Guadet and pointing to Danton, Louvet said: "See what a horrible hope shines on that hideous face!" "It is no doubt to-day," cried Guadet, "that Clodius drives Cicero into exile!" Danton answered them with an enigmatical grin. They failed to see that Danton was not one of their worst enemies until it was too late.

During the night the most extraordinary measures had been taken to prevent the flight of the threatened Deputies. Every military guard had been doubled; sentries had been set to watch the post-houses; the barriers had been closed and all external communication cut off. Warrants were out for the arrest of Lebrun, late Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Clavière, Minister of Finance.

The sitting began at half-past six.* A deputation from the Council-General of the Commune was admitted to the bar, which announced that it had discovered a great plot; but that the people had risen to destroy the conspirators. It next enumerated the measures which had been taken to ensure the public safety, and called upon the Convention to pay the

* Mallet du Pan appears to have hit on the reason why the Convention assembled at such early and irregular hours when he says: "Toute la Révolution est et sera jusqu'au bout une suite de coups de mains; l'avantage restera donc à celui qui gagne ses adversaires d'une minute."

forty sous a day which the Commune had already promised to patriot volunteers. At this point Guadet rushed to the tribune. "The Commune," said he, "has surely made a slight mistake in the choice of a word: it evidently means that it has 'undertaken,' not 'discovered,' a plot!"

These words occasioned a frightful uproar. When the tumult had at length subsided, the question was put to the vote. The result was a triumph for the rioters. The Convention weakly submitted to the dictation of the Commune and resolved to adopt all its recommendations.

A joint deputation from the Parisian Sections, Department, and Commune, next appeared at the bar, demanding the impeachment of the late Ministers, Roland, Lebrun and Clavière, the Committee of Twelve, and the twenty-two Deputies already denounced by the Commune. The petitioners were awarded the honours of the sitting. At this good news the rabble in the galleries could contain themselves no longer, but swarmed over into the body of the hall, and made the house ring with their cheers. Several of the Girondists rose to protest against this unseemly behaviour. "The Convention is no longer free!" they cried, and Vergniaud proposed that the members should go forth to claim the protection of the armed men outside. This was opposed by Robespierre, who, in order to gain time, delivered a long, rambling speech, in which he sought still more to inflame popular passion against the Girondists. At length, Barère, speaking on behalf of the Committee of Public Safety, proposed the abolition of the

obnoxious Committee, together with the permanent requisition of the public forces, and at the same time suggested that the Committee of Public Safety and the Commune of Paris be instructed to take common measures against all concerned in the plots which had that day been denounced in the Convention. Barère's proposals were adopted, and the sitting, which had lasted for sixteen hours, came to an end.

The conspiracy against the Girondists had again miscarried, although their enemies affected to have achieved their object, and ordered the town to be illuminated as for a great victory. Yet their efforts had not been wholly in vain, for in this first great trial of strength they had brought the Convention to its knees, and the independence of that body was now a thing of the past. Their project for the destruction of the Gironde was for a time deferred, but not abandoned.

CHAPTER XVII

Arrest of Mme. Roland—Witticism on Roland's flight—The threatened Deputies meet for the last time—Louvet states his views—He joins Lodoïska—A terrible night—Louvet in hiding—Insurrection of June 2nd—The Convention imprisoned by the mob—The Assembly seeks the protection of the soldiers, but is driven back—Thirty-one Girondists placed under arrest—Letter from Barbaroux—Why they refused to escape—Downfall of the Girondists—Their eloquence—General view of the feud between the Mountain and the Gironde.

AS Louvet entered the hall of the Assembly on the following day he was pained to hear that his and Lodoïska's friend, Madame Roland, had been arrested by order of the Commune. Her husband had made good his escape. "His body is indeed missing," said a wag, "but he has left his soul behind him." This news convinced even the most sanguine of the Girondists that their downfall was now only a matter of time. That day Louvet engaged all the threatened Deputies to meet at Meillan's house in the Rue des Moulins.* It was the last occasion on which they dined together. They were considering what action to take in the grave crisis which had arisen, when the mad clangour of the tocsin arose on all sides. Immediately afterwards a breathless messenger burst into the room to tell Brissot that the seals were put on all their houses.

Fearful lest his enemies should arrest Lodoïska

* Meillan (A.,) *Mémoires.*

during his absence, Louvet briefly explained to his friends what he considered to be the only course of action left open to them. "Since the Mountain and the ruffians in the galleries," said he, "are determined to prevent us from speaking in our own defence, there is no useful purpose to be served by our attendance at the Convention. Why give our enemies the opportunity of seizing their prey at one stroke? Nor can we hope to do anything in Paris, dominated as it is by the terror inspired by the conspirators who have usurped the constituted authority and made themselves masters of the forces of the State. France can be saved only by a Departmental insurrection. We ought, therefore, to seek without delay a safe retreat for to-night, and during to-morrow and the following days leave Paris, one by one, as the opportunity occurs, and reunite either at Bordeaux or in Calvados, where a movement against our tyrants has already manifested itself. Above all, we must not return to the Convention, for the Mountain would seize on us as hostages."

It was a wise counsel. To return to the Convention after its integrity had been violated was a fatal mistake. The people of the Departments had for long complained with reason of the supremacy of Paris, and of the favours so lavished upon its inhabitants.

All the contracts for the equipment and the provisioning of the armies went to Paris. Huge sums were expended to feed its poor, to liquidate its debts, to provide work for its unemployed, and to induce its citizens to enlist in the Civil Guard. But

the provinces were neglected. Was their patriotic zeal, then, to be maintained solely by their love of liberty? They were tired of starving themselves that Paris might be fed. It needed but this last outrage on their chosen representatives to arouse them to fury. The provinces were ripe for revolt. But so long as they saw members of the proscribed party still sitting in the Convention and taking part in its deliberations, they naturally thought that the alarming rumours emanating from the capital were exaggerated, and that the national representation was still intact. Under this impression their indignation gradually abated.

Whether it was that the desperate remedy of civil war was abhorrent to them, or that they still deceived themselves as to their inviolability as representatives of the people, many of the guests, including Brissot, Vergniaud, Gensonné, Mainvielle, and Valazé, remained unconvinced by Louvet's arguments. They were still deep in the discussion when Louvet quitted them to fly to the aid of Lodoïska in peril.

Happily the man who had so abruptly broken in upon their deliberations had given a false alarm, and Louvet found her in safety. She refused, however, to leave her house until she was assured that he would not return thither. She then went out to seek the mother of Barbaroux, to take her to a place of safety in the house of one of Louvet's relatives. Here the two women passed a terrible night. At every moment the air was rent with the wild ringing of the alarm bells and the thunder of the drums beating the general call to arms; and they turned sick with

fear as they heard the savage cries of the mob yelling for the heads of those dear to them. In an agony of terror for her son, the mother of Barbaroux moaned in despair, and from time to time fell at full length in a dead faint. "We rear them fine men," she cried, "and as soon as they reach maturity the wretches cut their throats!" With dry eyes and a stricken heart Lodoïska braced herself to comfort her friend. Her hair turned grey in that single night!

Louvet, however, had succeeded in reaching the house of his friends in safety, where for a fortnight he remained in strict concealment, watching for an opportunity of escaping from Paris.

Meanwhile, the agitators were busily preparing their plans for the consummation of the plot, which on the 31st had temporarily miscarried. The whole of June 1st was devoted to fomenting the insurrection, and in perfecting the measures which it was determined to put into execution on the following day, Sunday, June 2nd. Full executive powers for the insurrection were invested in a committee appointed by the Revolutionary assembly of the Évêché, and the services of Henriot and the whole of his command were placed at its disposal. Lastly, in order that there should be no slackness on the part of the National Guards, many of whom had shown a disposition to side with the Convention on the 31st, several battalions of furious *sans-culottes*, stationed at Courbevoie and other towns, awaiting orders to proceed to La Vendée, were recalled to the capital.

By ten o'clock on the morning of June 2nd the Con-

vention was surrounded by eighty thousand armed men, under the command of Henriot. Every seat on the Mountain was occupied, and the galleries were packed to suffocation. The disappointment was great when it was found that only three of the leading Girondists—Barbaroux, Lanjuinais and Isnard —were in their places.

A deceptive calm characterized the first part of the sitting, during which the Mountaineers sought to win over the Plain, and were naturally anxious not to shock them by violent propositions until they were quite sure of their ground. It was not until a deputation from "the constituted Revolutionary authorities of the Department of Paris" was announced that the storm began.

Before the speaker could say a word, Lanjuinais dashed up the steps of the tribune, and moved that these self-constituted Revolutionary authorities be forthwith abolished; that all their acts during the past three days be annulled, and that all who arrogated to themselves an authority contrary to the law be put beyond the pale of the law. "Get down from the tribune, or I will fell thee!" cried the butcher Legendre, making a motion characteristic of his trade. "First let Legendre get it decreed that I am an ox," answered the fearless Lanjuinais. Several Mountaineers, led by Legendre and the younger Robespierre, armed with pistols, forced their way into the tribune, and attempted to drag the orator down; but by clinging desperately to the cornice, Lanjuinais succeeded in maintaining his position. The rabble in the galleries screamed with delight at

the tussle, whilst the Plain cried shame on the disgraceful scene. The President put on his hat by way of protest. "This conduct fills me with pain," he said, when some sort of order was at length restored; "if you persist in such unseemly violence, Liberty will inevitably perish." The leaders of the attack on the Girondist orator were then severely rebuked, and Lanjuinais calmly proceeded. The Convention next granted audience to the deputation.

"Representatives of the people," said Hassenfratz,* the spokesman, "the forty-eight Sections of Paris and the constituted authorities of the Department have come to demand the impeachment of the Committee of Twelve, the men who are in league with Dumouriez, the men who are inciting the people of the provinces to march on Paris. For four days the inhabitants of Paris have been under arms. This counter-revolution must come to an end; all the conspirators, without exception, must be brought to the scaffold. The crimes of the factions in the Convention are known to you; we come for the last time to denounce them to you; we demand that without further delay you decree them guilty and unworthy the confidence of the nation. Patriots, you have often saved the country; we demand that you deal with these traitors; the people are weary of your postponing their welfare; they are still in your governance; save them, or they will save themselves."

* The appropriate *nom de guerre* under which Le Lièvre sought to hide a tattered reputation. For more of this worthy, *see* Dumouriez' *Mémoires*.

The President mildly reproved the tone of this discourse, but, nevertheless, invited the petitioners to share the honours of the sitting. But they were in no mood for cajolery and flatly refused. At this juncture the resourceful Barère sought to effect a compromise. Speaking in the name of the Committee of Public Safety, he urged the accused Deputies to submit to a voluntary ostracism for the good of the country. Isnard, Lanthenas and Dusaulx agreed to this proposal.

"I think I have shown some courage hitherto," said Lanjuinais, "and you can expect from me neither suspension nor resignation."

He was interrupted by furious cries, but steadily wearing down the opposition, he imperturbably proceeded: "It was the custom in barbarous countries to lead the victims of the human sacrifices to the stake crowned with flowers, but never have I heard that priests and spectators were allowed to insult them! . . . Abolish immediately every authority unrecognized by the law; have the courage to enforce your will, which is the will of the people, and you will soon see the agitators abandoned by the citizens whom they have led astray; unless you do this, I say, Liberty is lost. I see civil war, which is already kindled, spreading on every side; I see the fearful monster of militarism and tyranny stalking to and fro in the land, amid heaps of corpses and smoking ruins; and at last I see the overthrow of the Republic itself." Barbaroux next rose to support Lanjuinais' motion. "I have sworn to die at my post," he said, "and I will keep my oath." But

this was not enough for the Mountain; Robespierre and his clique, as Danton said, were thirsty and wanted blood. "What!" screamed Marat. "Are we to allow the guilty the honour of self-devotion? To offer sacrifices to his country, a man must be pure; it is to me alone, a real martyr of liberty, that devotion is appropriate. I offer, therefore, my suspension from the moment you decree the arrest of the accused Deputies." Billaud-Varennes and Chabot were equally magnanimous.

At this moment Lacroix burst into the hall, in the greatest disorder, to complain that he had been insulted and roughly handled by a sentinel who had refused to allow him to leave the building. It was now discovered that all the posts had been changed, and that strange guards had been stationed at all the issues with strict orders to prevent any Deputy from leaving. The Convention was imprisoned. For the moment several of the Mountaineers joined in the indignant protests of the Plain and the Gironde against this outrage. Just as if this was the first time it had tamely submitted to outrage! Barère, the man of expedients, again came to the rescue by moving that the Convention should suspend its sitting, march out of the hall in a body, and endeavour to recall the armed forces arrayed against them to a sense of their duty. This motion was supported by Danton and was adopted.

Hérault-Séchelles, the President, then put on his hat and, followed by the members of the Convention bareheaded, descended the grand staircase, crossed the vestibule, and led the way to the gate opening

on the Place du Carrousel. Before they had proceeded many paces the representatives were met by Henriot mounted on a charger. "What do the people want?" asked the President. "The Convention is solely occupied in promoting their welfare." "Hérault," replied Henriot, "the people have not risen to be put off with idle phrases. They demand that the guilty Deputies be delivered up to them!" And when the members attempted to pass out, "Artillerymen, to your guns!" shouted Henriot, and the humiliated Assembly hastily retreated. They tried all the outlets in succession, only to find themselves shut off by bands of armed *sans-culottes*. Meanwhile Marat hurried from post to post, encouraging the resistance of the soldiers. "No weakness," he cried. "Hold firm until they are delivered up!" Finding that all means of egress were denied them, the representatives returned to the hall of the Convention amid shouts of "Long live Marat!" "Long live the Mountain!" "Down with the Brissotins!"

Couthon, the paralytic, was now carried into the tribune to demand that the vote should be taken; and it was decreed that the members of the Committee of Twelve, the twenty-two denounced Deputies, and the two Ministers should be placed under arrest in their own houses.

Legendre proposed to erase from the list of the twenty-two the names of Boyer-Fonfrède and Saint-Martin Valogne, who had opposed the arbitrary arrest of Dobsent and Hébert; whilst Marat demanded that the names of Lanthenas, Dusaulx and Ducos should be struck out, because the first was

"a harmless sort of lunatic, Dusaulx an old idiot, and Ducos an empty-headed youngster who had been led astray by intriguers." He suggested that the names of Valazé and Defermon should be inserted instead. This was agreed to, and the decree was passed without further discussion. In all thirty-one members were ordered to be placed under the guard of one gendarme each in his own house.

On the morrow the intrepid Barbaroux wrote the following letter to his colleagues in the Convention :—

"PARIS, the 3 June, 1793. Year 2 of the Republic One and Indivisible.

"To the National Convention.

"Charles Barbaroux, Deputy of the Department of the Bouches-du-Rhône.

"CITIZENS, MY COLLEAGUES,

"Yesterday's sitting had scarcely terminated than I placed myself under arrest in my own house, in accordance with the decree of the National Convention, without examining the circumstances under which it had been issued, for it is not in my heart to add to the ills of the Republic the greater misfortune of an internal dissension.

"To-day, the administrators of the police of Paris have advised me of an order which appears to me to add to the provisions of the decree. I submit this order to you, Citizens, my Colleagues, together with my reply, and await the decision of the law to obey.

"BARBAROUX."

Paris le 3. juin 1793. l'an 2e de
la République une et indivisible.

à la Convention nationale

193 Charles Barbaroux Député par le Département des Bouches du
Rhône.

Citoyens mes Collègues -

13 après la Séance d'hier au soir elle été levée, que je me suis
mis moi même en arrestation dans mon domicile, la Convention

du decret de la Convention nationale, sans examiner les
circonstances dans les quelles il avoit été rendu, car il n'entre
pas dans mon coeur d'ajouter aux malheurs de la Republique.
Le malheur plus grand d'un déchirement intérieur. —
aujourd'hui les administrateurs de la police de Paris m'ont
fait signifier un ordre qui me paroit ajouter aux dispositions
du decret. je vous remets cet ordre, citoyens mes Collegues, —
ainsi que ma Reponse et j'attends que la loi prononce
pour obéir.

Barbaroux

" PARIS, le 3 Juin, 1793. L'an 2d de La Republique une et indivisible.

" À la Convention Nationale.

" Charles Barbaroux, Député par Le Departement des Bouches-du-Rhône.

" CITOYENS, MES COLLEGUES,—

" À peine la Séance d'hier a-t-elle été levée, que je me suis mis moi même en arrestation dans mon domicile, en execution du decret de la Convention Nationale, sans examiner les circonstances dans lesquelles il avait été rendu, car il n'entre pas dans mon cœur d'ajouter aux malheurs de la Republique le malheur plus grand d'un déchirement intérieur.

" Aujourdhui les administrateurs de la police de Paris m'ont fait signifier un ordre qui me paroit ajouter aux dispositions du decret. Je vous remets cet ordre, Citoyens, mes Collegues, ainsi que ma reponse et j'attends que la loi prononce pour obéir.

" BARBAROUX."

Almost at any time during the first days after the passing of the decree it would have been easy for the Girondists to have escaped, but many of them refused to make the attempt. It is difficult to understand the cause of this apathy. Perhaps they believed, with Madame Roland, that the sight of their oppression would revolt the public conscience, and that their cause would be better served by their imprisonment than by their freedom. A woman's fallacy which cost her her life! Ordinary men adore strength, however it is manifested, and are seldom shocked when the strong claim the right to oppress the weak. So far from arousing the indignation of

the public, the arrest of the Girondists set people wondering whether there might not, after all, be something in the charges brought against them.

Thus in the plenitude of their powers (for scarcely one of them had reached middle-age) fell the men who had rendered the name of the Gironde immortal.

All those whose eloquence, lofty idealism, and nobility of soul had shed fresh lustre on the Revolutionary cause were ruthlessly struck down, leaving only a pale and shattered remnant in the Convention to bear silent witness to the magnitude of its loss. It was their eloquence and their generous enthusiasm which for a brief space gave the illusion of reality to such metaphysical abstractions as the liberty, equality and fraternity of their day, the rights of man, and the sovereignty of the people. After their fall, we constantly hear the same terms in the mouths of their victorious enemies, but now they leave us cold and unmoved.

It is not till then we realize that such a phrase as "burning with a passionate love of mankind" —a phrase which they one and all never tired of using—is really devoid of meaning. How can a single person feel any affection for the anonymous and vague impersonality of so vast a multitude? He might almost as well talk of loving the Binomial Theorem! But when they said it, we smiled indulgently and heartily wished the good fellows joy of their love, for it was pleasant to hear them talk. Much of what they said was "nonsense, perhaps," as Lady Saphir remarked of Mr. Reginald Bunthorne's

latest lyrical effusion; "but, oh, what precious nonsense!"

It was this eloquence of theirs which led them into one of the gravest faults with which we have to reproach them—I mean their deplorable license of language. Even Madame Roland was guilty of using terms in relation to the unhappy Queen which ought never to have sullied her lips—terms of which, I believe, she lived to repent. For who shall deny that the memory of the cruel words she had spoken of that other mother in distress recurred to her with bitter self-reproach as she stood at the window of her prison, silently weeping at the thought of her own little Eudora, who was so soon to be thrown motherless and fatherless on the mercy of a heartless world?

This abuse of invective has done them irreparable harm. But to judge them by their words apart from their actions is unjust, since nothing is more characteristic of them than an incapacity for seeing facts behind words. It is true that the Mountaineers were not more addicted to violent language than they were; but it is also true that when they saw others carry their words into action, they drew back in horror, and they fell because they protested against the growing tendency to confound progress with disorder, liberty with license, and the Revolution with the Terror.

So, in this long and bitter warfare "of the passions armed with principles," the Mountain had at last won the victory. It was the triumph, not of a principle, but of a group of men over their political opponents.

Not the least tragic part of the situation lay in the fact that the principles of the rival parties were at bottom identical.

Danton, who possessed the clearest head and the most practical mind of all the Revolutionary leaders, perceived this from the first, and never wearied of advocating those mutual concessions by which they might have lived together in peace.

But though you may undertake the reformation of a scoundrel with some hope of success, it is futile to attempt the conversion of a philosopher. Danton's efforts were in vain. Yet, in spite of their mutual recriminations, they both had the welfare of their country at heart. The Mountaineers were no less sincere Republicans than were the Girondists; and they both had that pathetic and child-like faith in the infinite perfectibility of the human race. The difference was not one of principles, but a congenital and temperamental one. As some men are attracted to a party by their virtues, others are attracted by their vices. There never has been an accredited political party devoid of all true principle, or which did not respond to some legitimate human aspiration. Nor, on the other hand, has there ever been one which could not be twisted into serving as a pretext, a refuge, or a hope for some of the baser passions of our nature. The humane man—and there were such among the Mountaineers no less than among the Girondists—brought his heart and his intelligence to the service of his faith; the tiger, his teeth and his claws. It was the same faith working in different natures which

produced a Savonarola and a Torquemada, a Condorcet and a Robespierre.

The Mountaineers believed virtue and truth to lie in extremes, and all who refused to follow them in the path of violence and excess they accused of being half-hearted and insincere. They never understood that every honestly held opinion contains some portion of truth, and that with a few mutual concessions the opinions of all honest men are pretty much alike. But with the obstinacy of ignorant men, they clung to the belief that they alone had found the truth. In this, of course, they were mistaken. It is not given to men to look upon naked Truth and live. She is too dazzling a divinity for mortal eyes to bear.

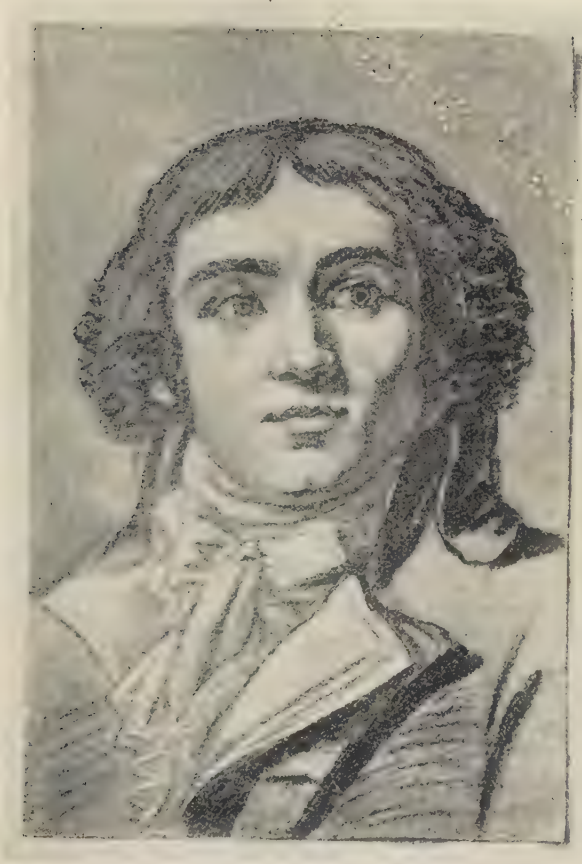
The Girondists, on the other hand, sought a middle path between the Terror and the Monarchy—a government by which a free and united people should be allowed to develop to the utmost its energies in every sphere of human activity, with the least possible interference of the State. They failed to find it ; and so, like the Sphinx of the fable, to adapt Rivarol's phrase, the Revolution devoured them because they failed to interpret her enigmas.

CHAPTER XVIII

Buzot and Barbaroux escape to Caen—A letter from Barbaroux—Generosity of Valazé—A common error rectified—Mme. Goussard—Lodoïska bears letters from Mme. Roland to Buzot—Louvet and Lodoïska leave Paris secretly—Their journey to Évreux—They meet Guadet—Lodoïska returns to Paris—Mme. Roland pities Lodoïska—Louvet and Guadet reach Caen—General Wimpfen—The Girondists organize an insurrection—Their official residence—Mme. Roland on Louvet's style—Barbaroux and the Marquise—Mme. Roland's disapproval—Louvet diverts his friends—"The Angel of Assassination"—Her farewell letter—Pétion's little joke—Louvet's opinion of Charlotte Corday—Girondists not implicated in the assassination of Marat—Puisaye's attack on Vernon—"A battle without tears"—End of the Girondist rising in Normandy.

BUZOT, Barbaroux and Gorsas, having eluded the vigilance of their guards, fled to Caen, which now became the centre of the Departmental insurrection. Louvet was still in concealment at the house of a sure friend, and for long could not make up his mind to leave those of his colleagues who had elected to stay in Paris. A letter which Barbaroux addressed to Duperret from Caen about this time may perhaps have finally brought him to a decision.

"Have you fulfilled my commission to Guadet?" asked the young Marseillais. "I wish he would come here. His soul must be sick at witnessing such outrages, and a sight of this beautiful country and our friendly sympathy would do him good. Let him come then, and bring Pétion, Louvet, yourself, and our other friends. Tell my mother and the



From an engraving by Baudran.

BARBAROUX.

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demoiselles Noël to speak to Mme. Cholet's nieces, who often go to see them, and if possible arrange to visit Mme. Cholet together, for she is sure to have some news of Louvet. I really must hear, for his silence worries me more than I can tell you."*

In these anxious days, Lodoïska acted as Louvet's agent in communicating with his colleagues in their confinement. Through her, he kept up a regular correspondence with Dufriche-Valazé, deputy for the Orne, who lived at Number 10, Rue d'Orléans. Again and again Louvet sent her to him and to Gensonné, entreating them to take advantage of the many opportunities of escaping which presented themselves; but both steadily refused on the ground that, whilst it was necessary for the majority of their comrades to leave Paris in order to stir up the provinces, it was the duty of a few to remain as hostages and a guarantee of the good faith of those who left. Reading the woman's heart of Lodoïska, the generous Valazé assured her that Louvet's presence was urgently needed in Normandy. He had, in fact, already sent to Caen for passports on his friends' behalf, they being described therein as brother and sister.

About this time, Mme. Roland wrote in her *Mémoires*:

"Une femme, dont on ne vantera pas les connaissances, mais qui unit aux grâces de son sexe la sensibilité d'âme qui en fait le premier mérite et le plus grand charme, trouva moyen de pénétrer

* Dauban, *Lettres de Barbaroux.*

dans ma prison. Combien je fus étonnée de voir son doux visage, de me sentir pressée dans ses bras, et d'être baignée de ses pleurs ! Je la pris pour un ange ; c'en était un aussi, car elle est bonne et jolie, et elle avait tout fait pour m'apporter des nouvelles de mes amis ; elle me donnait encore des moyens de faire passer des miennes."

It has been generally supposed that this passage referred to Lodoïska.* But although a certain intellectual arrogance was one of the "Great Citoyenne's" few faults, she would scarcely have used such terms in relation to Louvet's friend ; for we know, as she must have known, that Lodoïska was one of the most brilliant women of her circle, and we have already seen how Louvet was in the habit of employing her talents as a writer. The matter is put beyond dispute by a reference to her letter to Buzot, dated June 22nd, in which she gives him an account in almost the same words of a visit of Mme. Goussard :

"Cette aimable Mad. Goussard ! comme j'ai été surprise de voir son doux visage, de me sentir pressée dans ses bras, mouillée de ses pleurs, de lui voir tirer de son sein deux lettres de toi !—Mais je n'ai jamais pu les lire en sa présence, et j'avais l'ingratitude de trouver sa visite longue ; elle a voulu emporter un mot de ma main ; je ne trouvais pas plus facile de t'écrire sous ses yeux, et je lui en voulais presque de son empressement officieux."

Yet in spite of her tactlessness, the simple kindli-

* *See* Vatel, *Charlotte de Corday et les Girondins.*

ness, which she continually exercised at the peril of her life, has won Mme. Goussard a place in the annals of the world's good women.

There is no direct evidence that Lodoïska visited Mme. Roland at all during her captivity, though she was certainly the bearer of several of the letters to and from Buzot in Normandy; and we know that she was one of the few persons to whom Mme. Roland had confided her love. She was not an expansive person, and we cannot imagine her revealing such a jealously guarded secret, even to staunch friends such as Lodoïska and Mme. Goussard, before her arrest made it necessary, in order to ensure the means of communicating with Buzot. To Louvet alone among the proscribed Deputies, their affection for each other was no secret, and Mme. Roland in her letters seldom fails to send him some little personal message of sympathy and friendship.*

It was on June 24th that Louvet, accompanied by Lodoïska, left Paris. At Meulan they were obliged to change carriages. Their new driver proved to be a violent follower of Marat, and during the whole journey never ceased to utter the most fearful imprecations against "the rascally Deputies who were attempting to set the provinces in flames." He added that one of them, Buzot, had for a time deceived the people of Évreux, but they had now come to their senses, arrested him, and intended to take him back to Paris. Concealing their emotion at this disastrous news, the fugitives exerted themselves to sustain the conversation as gaily as they might. Early on the

* *See* Dauban, *Lettres de Mme. Roland.*

morrow, they reached Évreux, where they quickly satisfied themselves that Buzot was in safety, and that the town was in tumult on behalf of the Girondists. That evening they were about to proceed on their journey, when they saw advancing towards them a gaunt figure in the garb of a journeyman upholsterer. The man had a drawn, haggard face, a ragged black beard, and bright, beady eyes. His gait was that of utter exhaustion. It was some moments before they recognized Guadet. He had that day walked nearly fifty miles, mostly across country. He had intended to go on to Caen, but was obliged to stay the night at Évreux. They decided to remain with him, and engaged rooms in the same hotel.

To the dismay of Lodoïska, Guadet the next day suggested to Louvet that it would be unwise to expose their womenfolk to the perils which would now beset them, and strongly urged that Lodoïska should return to Paris. She received this decision with many bitter tears and entreaties, but Louvet at length persuaded her that this was the wisest course open to them. She set out the same day.

This involuntary parting was the cause of Mme. Roland unwittingly doing her an injustice. "Où donc Louvet a-t-il laissé son amie?" she asked of Buzot on the 7th of July. "Que je la plains! Cependant, si j'étais à sa place, tu ne serais pas seul aux lieux qui t'ont réçu, et je m'estimerais heureuse, car je partagerais tes dangers." "Where has Louvet left his friend? How I pity her! Yet, had I been in her place, thou shouldst not be alone wher-

ever thou wert, and I should esteem myself happy, for I should be sharing thy dangers." Being ignorant of the cause of Lodoïska's absence, she could not help feeling a half-contemptuous pity for the woman who, as she supposed, lacked the courage to face danger at the side of the man she loved—a happiness which, though often prayed for, had always been denied herself. Had she known the truth, she would have been the first to applaud her friend's sacrifice.

When Louvet and Guadet reached Caen, they found the insurrection in full swing. Buzot, assisted by Salle, Gorsas, and Barbaroux, had won over the Departmental authorities, and it had been decided to raise an army to march on Paris, with the design of reinstating the expelled Deputies, and protecting the Convention against the tyranny of the Mountain on the one hand, and the outrages of the *sans-culottes** on the other. The enrolment of volunteers was proceeding apace, and nearly two thousand men, consisting mostly of young Bretons and Normans of good family, were already under arms. But Louvet was astonished to find that his friends had entrusted the chief command to General Félix Wimpfen, formerly Deputy for Bayeux to the Constituent Assembly, in which capacity he had distinguished himself as an uncompromising Royalist. He vainly expostulated with them on their choice, urging that

* The lower classes at this time wore short trousers, whilst the gentry, and all men with any pretensions to elegance, wore knee-breeches. The term sans-culotte (breechesless) was first used by the Royalist Abbé Maury as a term of contempt for the rabble, but was adopted by the latter as an honourable name for all good patriots.

a man of such principles would irreparably injure their cause, even though his intentions were of the best, which in Wimpfen's case was at least open to question. His fears were only too well grounded, for there is little doubt that the General sought to use the Girondists to further his own ends ; and before many weeks had passed he openly advised them to throw in their lot with his party, and to negociate for arms and men, through him, with the English Government. Indeed, there is reason to think that the people of Caen at this time had a distinct leaning towards Royalism, but Pétion, Buzot, and Louvet did not suspect this until it was too late.

In spite of the Girondists' activity, the emissaries of the Mountain in Normandy viewed the situation with equanimity. Writing to the Committee of Public Safety on the 9th of June, Robert Lindet said :

" There is little reason to fear that a hostile army will come from this quarter, where heads are cool, though doubtless all good patriots will be persecuted."

Yet on that very day, the Council-General of the Department ordered the arrest and imprisonment of Romme and Prieur, commissaries of the Convention, and ardent supporters of the Mountain.

On the 18th, the Council allotted the former Hôtel de l'Intendance to the fugitive Deputies as their official residence, and provided them with a guard of honour. This fine old mansion, with its heavily-sculptured portal, and swing doors of ancient oak,

its vast balconied windows, and gigantic roof, jammed like a huge extinguisher uncomfortably over its head, is still standing, hidden away and almost forgotten, behind an ill-paved court-yard in the narrow and secluded Rue des Carmes. Here, where in former times the noble magistrates of Normandy sat in state, and the Girondists lived for some weeks in alternate hope and despondency, the peaceful merchants of to-day have installed their civic library. The Hôtel was immediately opposite the house of Mme. de Brètheville, with whom Charlotte Corday was then living.

On moving into their new quarters the Deputies set themselves ardently to the work of organization. Meetings were held every day, presided over by Pétion, with Salle and Lesage as secretaries, and every means was adopted to arouse the enthusiasm which they fondly believed lurked in the breasts of the sluggish provincials. Day by day they made burning speeches, and maintained a steady fire of pamphlets, manifestoes, news-sheets, and patriotic songs. Louvet's chief contribution to this mass of literature was a pamphlet printed at Caen on July 13th, entitled, "Observations sur le rapport de St. Just contre les députés détenus," of which Mme. Roland says, "J'y ai reconnu le style, la finesse, et la gaieté de Louvet : c'est la Raison en déshabillé, se jouant avec le ridicule, sans perdre de sa force ni de sa dignité."

All threw themselves heart and soul into the work, except Barbaroux, who often failed to put in an appearance at the meetings, being unable to tear

himself from the society of a lady who for the moment had succeeded in fixing his nomadic affections. For her he had forgotten not only the troubles of his country, but the bright eyes and tender heart of Annette, shortly to become the mother of his son, not to mention the blandishments of the freakish beauty who inspired his presumably retrospective verses on the cruelty of Philis. The present victim of the handsome young Deputy's predatory amours was a marquise who had recently embraced Republican principles in the person of the Girondist gay Lothario. He always referred to her as "Zélie." She had followed him to Caen, and had been promptly installed in the hotel in which Louvet, Buzot, and Pétion had shared a room before removing to the Hôtel de l'Intendance. Her presence annoyed Pétion, as he thought it was calculated to give rise to disagreeable insinuations against them. His fears were justified by the event. Zélie's infatuation had made her careless of all restraint, and she was often to be seen in public leaning on her lover's arm.* There is little doubt that, owing to this circumstance, she was confounded with Charlotte Corday, and her constant appearance in the company of Barbaroux was partly responsible for the fatal legend of his intimacy with Marat's assassin.

News of his escapade had reached even Mme. Roland, and in her next letter to Buzot, she takes the opportunity of gently rebuking not only the levity of Barbaroux, but also the dilatoriness of his colleagues:

* Dauban, *Mémoires de Pétion.*

"Et ce jeune Barbaroux," she says, "ne fait-il pas des siennes dans cette terre hospitalière? C'est pourtant le cas d'oublier de s'amuser, à moins que de savoir, comme Alcibiade, suffire à tout également. Quand je me rappelle la sérénité de P[étion], l'effervescence aimable mais passagère de G[uadet], etc.,—je crains que ces honnêtes gens, là-bas comme ici, n'emploient à *rêver* le bien public le temps qu'il faudrait consacrer à l'opérer."* The woman of the heroic love spoke there. She had made the great sacrifice herself, and could feel nothing but a mild form of contempt for the man who would not give up even his "amusements" at the call of his country.

It is clear that Barbaroux and his affairs caused his friends much uneasiness, and Pétion says they were often at this time grateful to Louvet, who readily employed his skill as a *raconteur* in diverting their thoughts from their hazardous situation by stories and anecdotes as brilliant and witty as his *Faublas*.

Such was the position of affairs when a tall and shapely girl, of the most pleasing appearance and engaging manners, called at the Hôtel de l'Intendance, and asked to see Barbaroux. She was accompanied on this, as on all future occasions, by an old manservant. Meillan and Guadet, who were in the reception hall at the time, at once sent for their colleague, and left him alone with his visitor and her companion. Barbaroux received her with that deferential and chivalrous manner habitual to him in his bearing towards women. Pleased with her

* Dauban, *Lettres à Buzot.*

reception, she briefly stated the ostensible motive of her call, which was to ask his advice in obtaining possession of some papers, then in the keeping of the Minister of the Interior, substantiating the claims of her friend, Mlle. de Forbin, to certain tithes and dues to which, as a canoness of Troyes, she was entitled. She addressed herself to him, she said, because her friend belonged to his Department of the Bouches-du-Rhône. Her real motive seems to have been to obtain news of the tyranny in Paris from a man who had suffered under it; but no hint of her secret design, if she had already formed it, passed her lips. She appears to have chosen Barbaroux because she judged him to be the most talkative, as well as the most easily accessible of all the Deputies in Caen. When he had heard her, he observed that the recommendation of an outlaw would probably be of more harm than use; but he promised her a letter of introduction to his friend Lauze Duperret, a Girondist Deputy, who had escaped proscription; although he bade her entertain small hope of success. Having obtained this promise she withdrew. It was thus that the tragic and impenetrable figure of the modern Judith first flashed across the page of history.

Her next appearance was at a grand review of the National Guard by General Wimpfen, organized by the Administrative Council of the Department with the co-operation of the Girondist leaders. This was held on Sunday, the 7th of July, and all the beauty and fashion of Caen had assembled to watch and applaud the spectacle. It was hoped that the

From an engraving by Levachez.

Designed and engraved by Duplessis Berteaux.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

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display would arouse the martial ardour of the provincial youths, and would result in a rich harvest of recruits. Louvet, Pétion, Buzot and other Deputies, with Charlotte Corday (possibly on the invitation of Barbaroux), viewed the parade from a balcony. When the music was over and the last eloquent speech had been made, the Girondists made a fiery appeal for volunteers. Seventeen responded to the call. Charlotte blushed with shame for the young men of her native town, and she afterwards referred to their meekness with delicate irony. But Pétion, noticing the expression of chagrin on her face, and interpreting it in his own way, asked:

"Would you be sorry if they did not go?"

Deeply mortified by his insinuation, Charlotte turned away without a word, and went home.

When she next called to get the promised letter, she found that Barbaroux had forgotten it; but he promised to send it on to her the next day without fail. During the interview she deftly turned the conversation to the state of Paris. At that moment Louvet and Pétion entered the hall, and the latter greeted her as "the pretty aristocrat who comes to see the Republicans."

"You judge me now without knowing me, Citizen Pétion," she replied; "some day you will know me better."

These enigmatical words were the nearest approach she ever made to an avowal of her secret plan. It is evident that she keenly resented Pétion's words, for she referred to them in her last letter to Barbaroux. He certainly had no idea at the time that he had

offended her. Honest Pétion was one of those tiresome persons who must have their little joke—generally the people who, of all others, are obviously the least entitled to it. Moreover, he was a fine figure of a man, and shared the fatuity which the consciousness of the possession of a "leg" appears inevitably to induce.* It needed a sterner school to bring out the many admirable qualities of his nature; and some months later, when he had passed a bitter apprenticeship to adversity, he sought, in his *Mémoires*, to make honourable amends for the levity which had wounded the pure and heroic girl who, with mistaken devotion, flung away her life in an unavailing attempt "to give her country peace."

The next day Barbaroux sent Charlotte the letter to Duperret, with a batch of papers which she had promised to deliver for him. They never saw her again. It was on the evening of the 13th July that she assassinated Marat, and on the 15th, which she quaintly terms "the second day of the preparation for peace," she addressed that famous letter to Barbaroux, "full of graciousness, intelligence, and elevation," of which Louvet says:

"Either nothing that is beautiful in the French Revolution will endure, or this letter will pass down the ages. Ah! my dear Barbaroux, in the whole of your career, so enviable throughout, I have never envied you anything but the honour of having your

* He really was a handsome fellow and had a pretty way with the ladies. In the early years of the Revolution he had accompanied Madame de Genlis to England in the most intimate of capacities.

name attached to this letter." Yet he felt that he was not unrewarded, for during her trial she had occasion to mention his name; from which circumstance he seems to have hoped for the languid honours of a conjectural immortality. The rest of the passage must be left in the original:

"Charlotte Corday, toi qui sera désormais l'idole des républicains, dans l'Élysée où tu repose avec les Vergniaud, les Sidney, les Brutus, entends mes derniers vœux, demande à l'Éternel qu'il protège mon épouse, qu'il la sauve, qu'il me la rende; demande-lui qu'il nous accorde . . . . quelques années d'amour et de bonheur; et si mes prières ne sont pas exaucées, si ma Lodoïska devait tomber sur l'échafaud, ah! que du moins je ne tarde point davantage à l'apprendre, et bientôt j'irai, dans les lieux où tu règnes, me réunir avec ma femme et m'entretenir avec toi."*

This is the farewell letter that "the Angel of Assassination" addressed to her father:—

"Forgive me, my dear Papa, for having disposed of my existence without your permission, but I have avenged many innocent victims, and prevented many new disasters. Some day, when the people are disabused of their errors, they will rejoice that they are delivered from a tyrant. When I tried to make you believe that I was going to England, it was because I wished to remain unknown, but I soon saw that this would be impossible. I hope you will not be worried; in any case, I think you will find defenders in Caen. I have chosen Gustave Doulcet for my counsel, but a deed of this kind admits of no defence;

* Louvet, *Récit de mes périls.*

it is a matter of form. Good-bye, my dear Papa; I beg you to forget me, or rather to rejoice at my fate; it is in a good cause. I embrace my sister, whom I love with all my heart, also all my relatives. Do not forget this verse of Corneille's:

"'The shame lies in the crime, not in the scaffold.'

"I am to be judged to-morrow at eight o'clock.

"CORDAY.

"The 16 July."

"Pardonnés moi Mon Cher Papa d'avoir disposé de mon existence sans votre permission, j'ai vengé bien d'innocentes victimes, j'ai prevenu bien d'autres désastres, le peuple un jour desabusé, se rejouira d'être delivré d'un tyran. Si j'ai cherché à vous persuadé que je passais en Angleterre cesque j'esperais garder lincognito mais j'en ai reconu l'impossibilité. J'espère que vous ne serés point tourmenté en tous cas je crois que vous aurés des defenseurs a Caën. J'ai pris pour défenseur Gustave Doulcet, un tel attentat ne permet nulle défense c'est pour la forme. Adieu mon cher papa je vous prie de m'oublier ou plutôt de vous rejouir de mon sort la cause en est belle. J'embrasse ma sœur que j'aime de tout mon cœur ainsi que tous mes parens. N'oubliés pas ce vers de Corneille

"'Le crime fait la honte et non pas l'echafaud.'

"C'est demain a huit heures que l'on me juge, le 16 Juillet.

"CORDAY."

There is, of course, not the slightest evidence for the charge of complicity in the murder, which was brought against the Girondist Deputies. Not one of them could have had the faintest suspicion of her design. In fact, they deplored the deed even more sincerely than the chiefs of the Mountain, for they

pardonnés mon Dieu Cher papa D'avoir Disposé de mon éxistance
Sans votre permission, j'ai vengé bien d'innocentes victimes, j'ai —
prevenu bien d'autres Désastres, le peuple un jour Désabusé, se
Réjouira D'être Delivré D'un tyran, Si j'ai Cherché a vous persuadé
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Defense Cest pour la Forme, adieu mon Cher papa je vous —

prie de moublier ou plutôt de vous Rejouir de mon Sort la
Cause en Est belle, j'embrasse ma Soeur que j'aime de tout
mon Coeur ainsi que tous mes parens, noublié pas Ce vers de
Corneille

le Crime fait la honte Et non pas le Chafaud

C'est Demain a huit heures que lon me juge, Ce 16 juillet

Corday

knew it would be the death-warrant of their friends in Paris. After protesting against this additional slander of their enemies, Louvet says :

" If she had consulted us, is it likely that we should have directed her weapon against Marat, knowing, as we did, that an incurable disease had already brought him to the brink of the grave ? "

Indeed, it is probable that the outlaws had almost forgotten the girl who visited them, and perhaps the most convincing proof of their innocence is afforded by the obvious, and not always very successful, efforts each of them afterwards made to recall something definite about her.

At the beginning of July, the Deputies for a while toyed with the notion of putting themselves at the head of the troops. As Pétion remarked, " there was something grand and magnanimous about this idea," which proved very attractive to some of the more ornamental members of the party ; but the cooler heads among them thought they would be little use as soldiers and still less as captains, and the idea was happily abandoned.

Meanwhile Wimpfen, who had so far confined his exploits to the delivery of speeches and journeyings to and fro between Caen, Évreux, and Lisieux, now delegated the command to Comte Joseph de Puisaye, his aide-de-camp, as firm a Royalist as himself.

On July 13th, Puisaye led a force numbering about a thousand men against Vernon, which was garrisoned by a small body of Jacobin soldiers.

Although he gave out that he wished to take the town by surprise, his vanity found satisfaction in marching out of Caen accompanied by all the pomp and circumstance of war. The whole neighbourhood flocked to see the spectacle.

All parties have lied so freely about this transaction that it is difficult to disentangle a coherent and reasonably credible narrative of what followed. It seems probable, however, that Puisaye, in his anxiety to make the most of his first command, would not wait for the arrival of his full complement of troops, but determined, if it were possible without too much risk, to take the wind out of his chief's sails by scoring a victory on his own account. But being a novice in the matter, he first marched his troops through the heat of a broiling day, and then could not resist the temptation of ordering an assault on a small fortress, the Château de Pacy, which he found on his way. The command was vigorously carried out, and on entering, he found he had wasted his ammunition on the desert air, for the place was undefended.

He next conducted his little army as far as Brécourt, a village quite close to Vernon, where he called a halt, and ordered the soldiers to pitch their camp on a neighbouring heath. Now it is not quite clear whether his negligence is to be attributed to the inexperience of a young soldier, or whether, like the Duke of Plaza Toro, he preferred "to lead his regiment from behind—he found it less exciting"; but having caused his troops to encamp, he immediately went off, leaving them to their own devices. Accord-

ing to his own account, he was so extenuated with fatigue that he found it impossible to proceed further without taking a few hours' rest. It was Rivarol who censured Lafayette, on the night of October 5th–6th, 1789, for having "*dormi contre son roi*," and if Puisaye cannot fairly be accused of actively combating the Republican cause, he was at least guilty of Lafayette's offence with respect to the Girondists at Vernon.

Abandoned by their general, the raw recruits threw all caution to the winds. The sentries on duty quitted their posts to go in search of "beer and beauty"; whilst the artillerymen left their guns, ranged one behind the other, in order to join their comrades round the camp-fires, where there was much joking, singing and uproar, as there is apt to be at such times even among full-fledged soldiers.

They had settled down comfortably to make a night of it. Their junketing was in full swing, when a column of the enemy appeared on the outskirts of the camp, and without even warning them of their presence, fired several shots over their heads. At the first alarm, they scrambled to their feet and searched wildly for their arms. Then there was a mad stampede. In the confusion, a few muskets went off, as it were, of their own accord, without damage to friend or foe. But the assailants now deemed it prudent to withdraw from an interview which, by reason of their opponents' careless handling of firearms, was fast becoming dangerous. The rival armies, having thoroughly frightened each other, thereupon fled in opposite directions, without waiting to make a future

appointment. At this moment the men of Ille-et-Vilaine, who had returned to camp as unofficially as they had left it, came upon the scene, and finding the abandoned guns with their traces cut, replaced the latter by their handkerchiefs, and gallantly pulled the former out of action. Thus ended the famous and almost fatal fray of Vernon, and with it the Girondists' hope of a Departmental insurrection.

CHAPTER XIX

Outlawed—Flight of the proscribed Deputies—They reach Vire—Lodoïska joins Louvet—Their marriage—The Deputies set out for Quimper—What happened to them at Dôl—A midnight alarm—Lodoïska proceeds alone to Quimper—Louvet's companions—A hostile town—Riouffe is detained—His escape—Boëtidoux the Royalist—He befriends the fugitives—Louvet inclines to suspicion—The outlaws are recognized—A trying ordeal—A quiet night and another alarm

AFTER the fiasco at Vernon the administration of Calvados secretly made peace with the Mountain. The first intimation of this defection was received by the fugitives three days later, when they found the decree of outlawry against them posted on the door of their hotel. Indignant at this cowardly betrayal, the Breton volunteers, who were to set out on the morrow, offered them arms, which were thankfully accepted. It was then decided that they should march out in the ranks of the volunteers as simple soldiers and seek refuge in the Departments. At Vire, Louvet learned that the Mountain, emboldened by the reverse of the insurgents, were busily making arrests in Paris. He trembled for the safety of Lodoïska. That night, tired out by the long march, he retired to rest at six o'clock, but was too much worried by the news from Paris to sleep.

At midnight a servant came to tell him that a lady was below asking to see him. It was

Lodoïska. On hearing the tidings of Vernon, she had promptly sold all her jewellery and hastened to Louvet that she might share in the dangers of the flight. Deeply touched by her devotion, and knowing that nothing he could urge would alter her decision, he gently pressed her to take the step which should unite them for ever. As this was now possible, owing to her divorce, which had been granted ten months before, he was unable to account for her hesitation. But at length he succeeded in overcoming her scruples. Perhaps a woman's sweetest hope, which arose about this time and is enigmatically referred to by Louvet some weeks later, was the chief factor in bringing her to a decision. They were married, it is said, by a non-juring priest. This was afterwards used against him by his enemies.* Their witnesses were Pétion, Buzot, Salle, and Guadet.

It must have been a trying ordeal to Buzot. His thoughts must often have wandered from the joyful ceremony at which he was assisting to the woman he loved, who had fallen into the hands of his enemies. Even so early he had given up all hope of seeing her again. He was not a sanguine man. Only from time to time he received one of those wonderful love letters which have so strangely come down to us. In fact Lodoïska had brought him one, and this helped him to bear the sight of his friend's great happiness. His fears were only too well founded. He never saw Mme. Roland again.

During these first days of reunion Lodoïska was all

* *See* Danican, *Les Brigands démasqués.*

for hastening to the nearest port and embarking for America. But Louvet pointed out that Lyons, Bordeaux and Marseilles were making a last effort, and it was his duty to proceed thither with his friends. She at once consented, but made him swear that they should never again be separated. A carriage was, therefore, engaged for her and the wives of some of the other Deputies who had determined to follow their husbands.

The march proceeded. At Fougères they sent forward a friend to Rennes with instructions to prepare the way for them to the sea, and to arrange for their passage by boat to Bordeaux. But Barbaroux afterwards persuaded them that it would be better to make for Quimper, whither the Deputy Kervélégan had preceded them, and where he had probably already arranged a safe retreat for them until they were able to embark. They therefore marched with the Finistère battalion, taking the road from Fougères to Dôl.

At Antrain about two hundred partisans of the Mountain made some show of arresting them, but on their taking up a determined attitude their enemies, as Louvet puts it, "dispersed and went home to bed." But on the outskirts of Dôl a rumour reached them that the municipal guards of that town, covered by artillery, were drawn up in line of battle to receive them. By hurrying forward the Girondist battalion reached Dôl before they were expected, and although the cannon were in position, there were no guards to serve them. They fixed bayonets and charged into the town without opposition. Volun-

teers were then chosen from their ranks to proceed to the municipal hall to demand an explanation of the mayor's hostile preparations. He replied that he had no intention of opposing the progress of the volunteers to their homes, but it was his duty to arrest the traitor Deputies in their ranks. This answer so incensed the faithful battalion that for a moment bloodshed seemed inevitable. But the outlawed representatives, seconded by the commandant of the guards, at length succeeded in restoring peace; and it was finally agreed that the fugitives should be allowed to dine in the town on condition that they left immediately after. Although they had intended to pass the night at Dôl, these terms were accepted.

"If you want to arrest them, beat the general alarm, and come and do it!" was the parting shot of the volunteers as they marched out of the town. At Dinan they were made welcome, and there they passed the night in safety.

The fugitives were, however, awakened at daybreak by angry and excited voices in the street below. Hurrying down they found that their enemies had mustered their forces during the night, and were endeavouring to persuade the volunteers to abandon them. This they sturdily refused to do. Thereupon, the fugitive Deputies, unwilling to embroil their friends further on their behalf, determined to separate from them, and to make their way as best they could across country to Quimper. The volunteers vainly tried to dissuade them from so dangerous a course, but seeing that the Deputies were firm in their resolution, they fitted

each out with a complete uniform, gave them their best weapons, and wished them God-speed. Before separating, however, the battalion insisted on leaving behind six picked men of their number to act as an escort, and lastly, the commandant, Fouchet la Bremaudière, the man who had helped to save them on the night of March 10th, signed discharges for them, in which they were described as volunteers of the Finistère battalion returning by the shortest route to their homes at Quimper.

Louvet's new-found happiness was short-lived, for, in spite of their vows to the contrary, it was found necessary to part from Lodoïska. But if all went well the separation would be a short one. It was decided that she should proceed by the high-road to Quimper and await her husband and his companions.

When her carriage had disappeared in the distance, Louvet and his friends began their three days' march. They numbered nineteen in all. There was Pétion, Barbaroux, Salle, Buzot, Lesage, Bergoeing, Cussy, Giroux, Meillan, Girey-Dupré, and Riouffe, a young journalist who had joined them at Caen. He was destined to escape the guillotine by a miracle; to write a wonderful book describing prison life under the Terror; to pronounce Louvet's funeral oration; and to die a Baron of the Empire. Besides these, there were the six guides, and Buzot's servant Joseph, who had refused to leave his master. Guadet, who had left the battalion at Dinan, was inadvertently left behind, and was fortunate in making his way unrecognized by the high-road to Quimper. There is a shade of irritation in Louvet's reference to his

friend's imprudence, attributable, no doubt, to a highly nervous state, for he had a brother's regard for Guadet, and this feeling was warmly reciprocated. Guadet's little girl was christened Lodoïska. Others of Louvet's companions failing to put in an appearance were Valady, who had stayed behind with a friend and succeeded in rejoining them later; Larivière, who for some time had found a hiding-place near Falaise; Duchâtel and Kervélégan, who, as we have seen, had preceded them to Quimper to prepare a place for them; Mollevaut, who also had left them a few days previously; the young Spaniard Marchena, the inseparable friend of Brissot; and finally, Gorsas, the journalist, with his young daughter, had gone to some trusty friends at Rennes, whom, however, he soon rashly quitted to proceed to Paris, and paid for his temerity with his life.

The fugitives took the main road as far as Jugon, and then cut across country. At nightfall they reached a solitary farm. In the kitchen they found supper laid for them, consisting of a small hare, brown bread, and bad cider, yet they ate heartily of this meagre fare, and then retired to sleep on the straw in an adjoining barn. They passed a good night, and daybreak found them again on the move.

Having carefully avoided the town of Lamballe, their route lay through a few wretched hamlets, in passing which nineteen armed men need have no fear, and one or two small towns where they deemed it prudent to make a detour; but a mistake of one of the guides brought them so close to Moncontour that it was impossible to turn aside without

arousing suspicion. To add to their danger it was market day, and the place was filled with some fifteen hundred peasants and a strong force of National Guards. They passed through the town with an assurance they were far from feeling. Riouffe, a bad walker, following at some distance from the others, was arrested, and after reading his discharge, a soldier seemed inclined to take him to the town hall; but he pointed to his comrades, and said: "How am I to overtake them?" The soldier let him go.

They had barely left Moncontour when they were joined by Boëtidoux, a good friend, though a Royalist, who had been a member of the Constituent Assembly.* He was lavish in his expressions of delight at seeing them, which, however, they could not help thinking were, under the critical circumstances, singularly indiscreet.

Uneasy at their non-arrival at Rennes, he had come out to look for them. At Lamballe he had come across Lodoïska, and she had told him of the change in their plans. He said that the road they were taking was exceedingly dangerous, and that it would be much safer to go to Rennes. He then told them to wait for him at some cottages which he pointed out in the distance, whilst he went to fetch some provisions, of which they were in great need. After a delay of an hour, he returned with a scanty supply of food, which very soon disappeared. He next warned his friends that some of them had been recognized at Moncontour, and he himself

* Hérissay, *Un Girondin : François Nicolas Buzot.*

had heard the words, "There is Buzot. There is Pétion." He again strongly advised them to revert to their original plan, but they rejected the proposal. As it was at the heat of the day, and they had already walked many miles, he suggested that they should take a rest until four o'clock in a thick wood situated at a short distance, when one of his nephews would bring them more food, and then conduct them to the house of a relative, six or seven miles further on.

There Boëtidoux himself would await them, and they would be sure of comfortable beds and could take a good night's rest in perfect security. The offer was too tempting, and was accepted, though Louvet and Meillan, who did not altogether trust their talkative friend, would far rather have continued their journey with the soldiers for guides. When he had gone, after conducting them to the copse, they lay flat on the ground hoping to escape observation. But for long they were much disquieted by a number of children coming to play near where they were concealed. The children were at last driven off by a rain-storm, which wetted the fugitives to the skin. It was five o'clock when Boëtidoux's nephew gave the appointed signal; and even then he had a quarter of an hour's business in the neighbouring village which took him an hour and a half to do.

When at last they made a start, night was fast coming on. They walked for a long time and still seemed far from their destination. At ten o'clock the volunteers, who, confiding in the new guide, had scarcely noticed the direction in which they were

being taken, observed that he was about to lead them into quite a large town. The Deputies declared that they would not trust themselves to pass that way. They finally went round the town, giving it as wide a berth as possible. Even at that distance they distinctly heard the drums beating.

"That's the tattoo," said the nephew.

"The tattoo," answered Louvet, "is never beaten at this time."

They listened; there could be no doubt about it, the drums were beating to arms. The guide tried to persuade them that the tattoo was always beaten so in that neighbourhood.

But they got round the town unobserved, and were soon after met by Boëtidoux, who conducted them to his relative's house, as he had promised. The latter welcomed them heartily, though he seemed surprised at their arrival. It was then discovered that Boëtidoux had forgotten to apprise him of their visit. After a hastily improvised supper, they retired to rest on five mattresses which they spread out in the room allotted to them. On leaving them Boëtidoux locked them in and did not return until eight o'clock to release them, when he complained that they had made too much noise. He increased their alarm by saying that an administrator of a neighbouring district had lodged in the room overhead. This man was no friend to the cause, and if he had overheard them they had the worst to fear. Their host gave them an excellent breakfast, and after Boëtidoux had again vainly pressed them to make for Rennes, the fugitives resumed their journey. Lesage,

who had severely sprained his ankle, and Giroux, who was suddenly taken ill, were left behind. Both were destined to escape the scaffold which claimed so many of their friends, and to return to the Convention after the 9th Thermidor.

CHAPTER XX

The flight continued—In the name of the law!—A game of bluff—The Girondists fix bayonets—Louvet explains a point of caligraphy—*Dansons la Carmagnole!*—A terrible march—Louvet drinks with mine host, and gets news—The fugitives reach Carhaix—What befel them there—Their miserable plight—They reach Quimper—Arrest and escape of Lodoïska.

PURSUING their journey throughout the day, nightfall brought the little band of fugitives to a village about two miles from Rostrenen, at that period the chief town of a district in the Department of the Côtes-du-Nord. As it was necessary to make a circuit to avoid this town, and some of the party were already overcome with fatigue, it was decided to call a halt at the village for the night. The seventeen took up their quarters in a spacious barn. At one o'clock in the morning they were startled from their slumber by the words:

"Open, in the name of the law!"

The place was in complete darkness. One of them ran to the door, peeped out, and immediately locked it.

"The house is surrounded," he whispered.

A threatening voice now repeated:

"Open, in the name of the law!"

For some moments there was silence whilst the fugitives quickly dressed themselves; then their reply rang out like a pistol shot:

"To arms!"

From below the command to open came with less assurance.

"We will come out as soon as we are ready," they replied.

Adapting himself to the character he had assumed, Louvet says he roared as lustily as a Cordelier; meantime he hunted for his musket, which had got buried in the straw. When they were fully armed, they opened the door, and a little fat man in a tricolour ribband strutted in, followed by a considerable number of National Guards, all bearing torches.

"What are you doing there?" gruffly demanded the administrator of the district.

"Sleeping," answered Barbaroux.

"Why in a barn?"

"We should certainly have preferred your bed," said Louvet.

"Who are you, Mr. Jester?"

"A tired volunteer, like the rest of us, who hardly expected to be roused so early in the morning," said Riouffe with a laugh; "but scarcely a mister, as you can see for yourself."

"You soldiers! We shall soon see about that."

"You certainly will," gaily answered the Breton trooper whom the fugitives had elected as their commander.

"Show me your papers," resumed the administrator.

"In the market-place, by all means, citizen, if you desire it," answered Pétion.

"Yes, we are not going to explain ourselves in this barn," said another.

"By your leave," said the captain of the little band, pushing back the administrator; and reaching the open, he shouted:

"Forward, Finistère!"

In a moment they were outside, drawn up in line with shouldered muskets. The magistrate was taken by surprise. He had expected to find a dozen fine gentlemen in dressing-gowns, attended by four or five armed men. Yet he was a cautious man, for beside the guards, he had in his rear a body of cavalry and a brigade of foot soldiers. But, undaunted by their inferiority of numbers, the seventeen prepared to die gamely if it came to a fight, for they knew that defeat would mean the scaffold. Louvet quietly loaded a blunderbuss, made to fire twenty shots at once. It was one of Lodoïska's gifts. These preparations were not without effect on their opponents.

"They are armed from head to foot," muttered a citizen soldier uneasily.

"Why have you so many weapons?" at length asked a bolder spirit.

"You know as well as we do," answered Buzot, "that there are scoundrels in this district who delight in annoying the Departmental troops, and we were determined that even if they did not like us they should at least respect us."

"I don't believe those fellows ever go to sleep," said Louvet, running his eye contemptuously over the ranks of the enemy.

"Oh! we'll soon send them to sleep," answered Barbaroux gaily.

Meanwhile the magistrate carefully examined the

discharges, which were handed to him one by one. When he had finished, he remarked irritably that they were all in the same handwriting.

"That," answered Louvet, "is because our commandant always writes with the same hand, and had each of us forged his discharge they would obviously be in different handwriting."

"Well, gentlemen," said he at last, "what do you mean to do now? For my part, I would advise you to go to bed again."

But they were not to be so easily caught. They said that since they had been turned out so early they would avail themselves of the mishap by pushing on to their destination.

The magistrate stepped aside to speak with some officers, and said they could do as they wished, but it was absolutely necessary that they should report themselves at Rostrenen, where they were expected. He said they would have to march with an advance guard of twelve soldiers and a rear guard of some forty others. Directly these threatening dispositions were made known to the fugitives, their captain's voice rang out: "Fix bayonets!" The command was instantly obeyed. An ancient regard for his skin set the worthy administrator in a tremble, and he said in a low voice:

"You surely do not mean to offer resistance to——"

"Oppression, certainly," interrupted Cussy of Calvados. "Are we free, or are we not?"

"If we wished to treat you as prisoners we should deprive you of your arms."

"And that you cannot do until you have deprived us of our lives," said Pétion.

"What!" cried one of their soldier friends, all of whom had fought in La Vendée. "You disarm us! There are a good many of you, but not enough to do that!"

"But, citizens, will you not come with us to Rostrenen?"

"Certainly we will, for that is on our way; still, we shall be on our guard."

"Do you suppose we have hostile intentions?"

"We can only judge by your acts; how should we know who you are?"

"You will know us when we get to Rostrenen."

"Well, let us get on."

On the road the fugitives sang the *Marseillaise* at the top of their voices, as their Girondist friends, whom they had left in Paris, were so soon to sing it on the way to the guillotine. They were not at all easy as to the kind of reception they would meet with in Rostrenen, and they silently laid their plans. From time to time a soldier of their escort would approach and question them. One asked Louvet if he had seen Charlotte Corday at Caen.

"Our battalion had not arrived there at the time of the murder," he replied.

"It was the deed of an assassin," remarked the soldier.

"Corday was a Brutus, but Marat was no Cæsar," enigmatically answered Louvet; and then, fearing more embarrassing questions, he started singing *Dansons la Carmagnole* at the top of his voice. These

patriotic songs helped to allay suspicion, and by the time they reached the communal hall they were on quite good terms with many of the guards forming their escort. In that building all the magistrates were assembled, and these, after a perfunctory examination of their papers, set them at liberty, and suggested an adjournment to a neighbouring café where the *entente* was confirmed over tankards of cider. During this function one of the magistrates showed the following letter, which had recently been received by the municipality, in explanation of their detention, and perhaps to watch its effect upon them as a final test :

"I beg to advise you that Pétion, Buzot, Barbaroux, Louvet, Meillan, Salle and some other Deputies, accompanied by five soldiers of the Finistère battalion, are on the road to Quimper. Last night they slept at ——; they left there this morning, and will reach your district this evening. I warn you in order that they may be arrested——"

The administrator then broke off reading and said : "So you see, gentlemen, that we really had some reason to suspect you."

They received this communication with a well-feigned roar of laughter, and again striking up the *Carmagnole*, withdrew from an interview which was fast becoming dangerous, and left the town without opposition.

The incident had been startling enough, showing them the necessity of pressing forward with the least

possible delay, for it was clear that the news of their flight had preceded them, and the least imprudence or the most trivial accident might ruin them. Once outside Rostrenen, they left the highway and crossed a barren heath, where for some twenty miles they could find nothing but a wayside brook, at long intervals, to quench their thirst. To add to their troubles, from eight o'clock the sun grew intolerably hot, and most of the outlaws felt ready to drop.

Buzot was obliged to throw aside his weapons, and even then had the greatest difficulty in keeping on his legs; a severe attack of the gout made Cussy groan at every step he took; Riouffe was compelled to take off his boots which pinched him, his feet were soon covered with blood, and he was obliged to borrow an old pair of shoes belonging to Buzot's servant; and, lastly, Barbaroux, who at twenty-eight was as corpulent as a man of forty, suffered from a bad sprain, and could drag himself along only by leaning on Louvet, Pétion, or Salle. In this plight they wearily tramped mile after mile.

At a little before noon they came to a hamlet, where they were refreshed by a meagre dinner at a wayside inn, and, above all, by an hour's rest. During the meal, Louvet, who had borne the march better than his companions, noticed that the host eyed them narrowly; this was more than enough to arouse his ever-ready suspicion, and he at once invited the man to drink a glass of cider with him, which he at first refused; but having at length been persuaded to take one, was tempted to take a second, a third, and then others. These soon had the desired

effect, and rendered him talkative. He opened the conversation by saying :

" I am delighted to see you, citizens, for I believe you are all good patriots."

" Of course we are."

" Yet what enemies people have to be sure ! From the description they gave me I am sure you are the persons they are after. Two brigades of infantry are lying in wait for you at Carhaix, and you can't help passing through there."

They again set off, but in spite of the urgency of the danger, the lame ones among them lagged behind more than ever. Riouffe especially suffered such torture that he was obliged to stop every few minutes. Yet nightfall found them on the outskirts of Carhaix, which town they were compelled to traverse for fear of losing their way in the surrounding marshes. They threw themselves on the ground to discuss the situation. Some of the lame ones voted for sleep at any price.

" If we must die," said Cussy, " I would rather die here than ten miles further on," and he turned over and went to sleep.

But Louvet, supported by Barbaroux, vehemently besought them to make a dash through the town at once, when there was a chance of their getting through without being observed. This was eventually agreed to, and in a compact body they marched quietly down a side street. All was silent. Suddenly a door opened, a light gleamed through, and a girl on the threshold said distinctly : " Look ! they are passing by ! "

Finding that they were discovered, they doubled

their pace, and immediately wheeled to the left, down a narrow hollow way, where it was impossible to see more than a foot before them. "I hear horses," said one. The pressing danger nerved even the weakest of them to make one more effort. The last houses were soon left behind, and they found themselves on a smooth, broad high-road, bordered on each side by thick hedges, from the cover of which they thought they could safely defy all the National Guards in the Department.

A short halt was called, and they listened for the pursuit, but could hear nothing. It was then discovered that two of their guides were missing! They lay down in the grass for an hour and waited for them. But they did not return.

It was clear that their guides had taken a turning in the dark which they had not noticed. This was the more awkward because the remaining guides were strangers to that part of the country. It was decided to take a short cut across fields to the place where their companions must have left them. They slowly struggled over a tract of waste land, full of pitfalls, and intersected by thick hedges, which tore their flesh and rent their clothes; there were ditches to leap and marshes to cross, and sometimes they were up to their knees in slush. After two hours of indescribable misery, bruised, crippled and utterly worn out, they struck the high-road some miles nearer to Carhaix than they were before! They wondered whether, after all, they had taken the right road. Bergoeing and another volunteered to go back to the town in order to find this out. In a quarter of an

hour they returned, having been unable to discover another road. Sick at heart, the fugitives retraced their steps, almost too weary to trouble whether they were on the right road for Quimper or not. For half an hour they dragged themselves along, and then, unable to go further, threw themselves on the grass and at once fell asleep. An hour passed, and they were again on the march. At dawn they found that another of their guides had disappeared; they thought he must have been asleep, unperceived, when they left their last halting-place. It was impossible to go back for him, and in any case he could proceed to Quimper alone without danger. This reduced the little company to fourteen.

Fainting with hunger, and falling at every few steps, they pursued their march, sometimes reaching a wayside cottage, where they hoped to find relief; but they were no sooner observed than all doors were closed against them. At last they met a wayfarer, who informed them that they were on the road to Quimper, which was about four miles distant.

Even now their troubles were not at an end, for it was unsafe to advance nearer to the town without communicating with Kervélégan, and the two guides whom they had lost outside Carhaix alone knew the place where he had arranged to meet them. They resolved to send their only remaining guide to Quimper to seek out their friend. He left them at eight o'clock, after hiding them as well as he might in a thick wood close to the road. Even under the most favourable circumstances he could not hope to be back for three

or four hours. It now began to rain in torrents, and the fugitives were soon drenched to the skin. They had eaten nothing for over thirty hours. Huddling together for warmth, their spirits wavered. The habitual gaiety of Riouffe and Girey-Dupré now forsook them, though one or other occasionally achieved a sickly smile. Cussy and Salle railed against nature; Buzot lost heart, and even the heroic soul of Barbaroux grew depressed. For a moment Louvet thought of ending his misery with the pistol which Lodoïska had given him, but he could not bear the idea of never seeing her again. Pétion, whose character in the days of his prosperity had been distinguished for ineffable fatuity, alone rose to the occasion, and bore every adversity with admirable fortitude.

Twenty minutes later the soldier returned, accompanied by Abgral, one of the chief magistrates of the Quimper district and a faithful friend of their cause, whom by a happy chance he had met riding out to look for them. Forgetting his hunger, fatigue and other misfortunes, Louvet ran forward to inquire after Lodoïska. After meeting Boëtidoux she had proceeded on her journey; but at St. Brieux she found a denunciation had got there before her and she was at once arrested. Her address and the steadiness of her answers alone saved her, and after a severe cross-examination by the municipal authorities, she was released and allowed to continue her journey.

CHAPTER XXI

A humane priest—Mme. Roland's last letter to Buzot—The outlaws separate—Barbaroux down with the smallpox—Lodoïska's harbour of refuge—Louvet's hiding-place—An expansive lover—The delights of Penhars—Seven of the outlaws sail for Bordeaux—What happened to them—Louvet's change of residence—He composes his *Hymne à la Mort*—A dramatic exit—Louvet meets an "admirable Crichton"—Lodoïska returns to Paris—A dash for the sea—Suspense—The outlaws search for their ship in an open boat—A sleepless night—The good ship *Industrie*—A dour Scot—The fugitives run the gauntlet of the Brest Fleet—They prepare for a fight—A mutinous crew—Grainger lies stoutly—The white cliffs of Saintonge—The Girondists escape in the ship's boat—Perilous seas—The promised land, and what they found there.

ABGRAL first conducted his friends to a peasant's cottage, where they broke their long fast with brown bread washed down with a little brandy. Never was repast so delicious! After this refreshment they were taken to the house of a constitutional priest, to whom they were introduced as soldiers returning from the pursuit of refractory persons!—from which it is clear that his hardships had temporarily obscured even Louvet's imagination. Happily the good priest's humanity got the better of his suspicion, if he entertained any; and he warmed, dried, fed, and hid them until nightfall, when they made for a neighbouring wood, where horses awaited those who were too lame to walk. It was then deemed prudent to separate. The parting was a painful one, for the common dangers they had run

had united the fugitives in the warmest friendship—there were tears and embraces and vows of eternal affection. Buzot was received into the household of "a worthy man" in the environs of Quimper, where he received the last pathetic letter from Mme. Roland, ostensibly addressed to the husband of her convent friend, Sophie Cannet, and cleverly disguised as an ordinary business communication relative to a consignment of merchandise to America—a discovery we owe to the critical acumen of M. Faugère.*

Pétion and Guadet found refuge at a neighbouring country seat, where they were soon joined by Valady and Marchena. Salle, Bergoeing, Meillan, Cussy, and Girey-Dupré went to Kervélégan's; whilst Louvet and his inseparable Barbaroux, accompanied by Riouffe, were welcomed by M. de la Hubaudière, an intrepid defender of their cause. Here Barbaroux was stricken with smallpox and was medically treated without being recognized; and here, during his convalescence, he composed the first part of his memoirs.

As for Louvet, the day after his arrival he received a visit from his dear Lodoïska, who told him she had succeeded in finding a charming little country house in the Commune of Penhars, about a mile from Quimper, where, in spite of the dangers which threatened on every side, they might hope to snatch a few days' happiness in each other's society. Louvet thereupon begged forgiveness of Barbaroux for leaving him that he might fly to Lodoïska's harbour of refuge, and enjoy, as he puts it, "the dear delights of that

* Faugère, *Mémoires et lettres de Mme. Roland.*

true love, at once passionate and tender, happy and respectful, constant yet ever new, which she inspired and as warmly reciprocated."

He found that she had constructed an impenetrable retreat in case of attack. "Louvet's hiding-place" is still pointed out to the sight-seer of to-day.*

Some think with Lucetta—

". . . They love least that let men know their love."

Others with Julia, that—

"They do not love that do not show their love."

Both are, of course, wrong. It is purely a matter of temperament.

There is the reticent lover, and there is the expansive lover. The first thought of the former is to shut out all others from his joy, that, like a miser, he may gloat over his treasure in private; whilst the latter, like a man bubbling over with a good story, cannot rest until he has told it to his friend, and, failing him, to the first-comer with a sympathetic face. Louvet belonged to the second category. For him the story of Gyges and Candaules had no terrors. He took the whole world into his confidence—he may have thought that there was safety in numbers; and, besides, Lodoïska was not a Queen of Lydia. His account of the delights that Lodoïska had prepared for him at Penhars is a long one, and he had now fully recovered his imaginative faculty, so I will pass on without troubling the reader with the details.

* Vatel, *Charlotte de Corday et les Girondins.*

five sails appeared on the horizon, and the nervous crew threatened to mutiny unless the captain consented to keep close to the shore. As there was no help for it but to humour them, the whole morning was lost, and when the coast was again clear, the convoy had a start of twelve hours.

The next day passed without incident. The weather was fine, the sea calm, and the brig, at the will of a strong breeze, gave of the best that was in her. At sunrise on the twenty-second there was a fresh alarm. The look-out signalled eight vessels ahead; then ten, twenty, thirty, all ships of the line, belonging to the great Brest fleet. We can imagine what this meant to the fugitives, for they knew that a price was set on their heads, and that each captain in the French service had orders to search every vessel he met at sea, and, above all, strictly to examine the passengers.

The *Industrie* was compelled to run the gauntlet of the whole fleet. It was a tight corner! Grainger coolly paced his bridge, with a glib lie ready for the first speaking-trumpet that should hail him. Meanwhile the seven prisoners lay flat on the floor of the cabin, hugging their weapons, and determined, if it came to a fight, to sell their lives dearly. They were allowed to pass unquestioned.

That evening they overtook the convoy. A frigate drew near.

"From what port do you come?"

"Brest."

"You are a long way astern."

"We have on every stitch of canvas."

" Your vessel is a very bad sailer then."

To this there was no reply, though it must have been hard for the old salt to swallow his retort to a suggestion which must have touched him on the raw.

" Have you any passengers on board ? " suddenly demanded an officer on the frigate.

" No ! " promptly returned Grainger.

The frigate immediately lowered a boat. The Girondists, thinking the end had come, threw all compromising papers overboard, cocked their pistols, and waited. Who shall describe the concentrated misery of those few minutes ?

But the boat was sent only to fix a cable, so that the frigate might take them in tow until they should come up with the convoy.

In the evening the wind freshened, blew to a gale. At dawn on the twenty-third, flying before the wind, she came in sight of La Rochelle. Disliking the appearance of the weather, the crew—a chicken-hearted lot, one imagines—again became mutinous, demanding that the captain should put into port. But this he steadily refused to do ; and his firmness, assisted by a generous distribution of paper money by the Deputies, at length averted the peril.

Towards midday there was a lull in the storm, and the brig soon after doubled the headland of La Coubre, and entered the Gironde. At the mouth of the estuary the convoy was ordered to defile before the flagship, the *Industrie* being one of the first. Again the ominous question rang out : " Have you any passengers on board ? "—and again the good Grainger cheerfully perjured his soul.

The convoy sailed slowly up the great river, the low hills of Médoc on the one hand and the white cliffs of Saintonge on the other. Near the fort of Castillon the tide began to ebb, and it was necessary to cast anchor. The captain of the *Industrie* contrived to place his vessel as near to the shore and as far from the others as possible.

Just before dawn, Grainger, with four sailors, lowered the ship's boat, and taking the seven refugees on board, began to row for the shore. They were immediately brought up sharply by the watch on the flagship, but were eventually allowed to pass. The navigation of this part of the river is rendered perilous for small craft by the swiftness of the current and by the presence of innumerable islands above the surface of the water and a multitude of sandbanks beneath. The gunwale of the overloaded skiff was almost level with the waves, and all were kept busy baling out the water, which fast poured over the side. At every moment she threatened to sink. Thus they passed uncomfortably by the vine-clad hills of Médoc. They reached Vauban's frowning citadel of Blaye, and crept painfully by without being disturbed.

They could have shouted for joy when they saw the Bec d'Ambès, the low point bordered with reeds and swamps, which thrusts itself between the Dordogne and the Garonne. It was their own country, their promised land. They waded ashore. Clubbing together, they were able to present Grainger with a sum of about eighty pounds for the dangers he had faced on their behalf. This he accepted,

and after wishing them good luck, returned to his ship.

At last they breathed freely. They were in the Gironde, the province which had elected them as its representatives, whose cause they had so faithfully served. They felt that all their troubles were over. Alas! they were soon to learn the bitter truth! Their enemies had been before them. The Gironde was already crying for their blood!

CHAPTER XXII

Guadet's imprudence—Too late!—Pétion and Guadet spy out the land—Bordeaux under the Terror—Guadet goes to Saint-Émilion—Denounced—They barricade themselves in a house—Ominous preparations—A narrow escape—The sleeping sentinel—A hot pursuit—The outlaws separate—A terrible fortnight—Adventures of Louvet, Barbaroux and Valady—Louvet meets with an accident—Life in a hayloft—The coming of a heroine—Mme. Bouquey welcomes the outlaws—Their life in the caverns of Saint-Émilion—Execution of twenty-one Girondists in Paris—Death of Mme. Roland—Buzot's despair—Mme. Bouquey in tears—She is forced to part with the outlaws—Her sacrifice and death.

AT the Bec d'Ambès Guadet hoped to find an asylum at the country seat of his father-in-law, Citoyen Dupeyrat, a banker; but on their arrival the Girondists found the house shut up and nobody there to receive them. Whilst the keys were being fetched, they entered a neighbouring inn, where Guadet, with his habitual frankness, had the signal imprudence of making himself known to a cooper named Blanc, and of asking him as an old acquaintance to open Dupeyrat's house and light a fire for him and his friends. After that it was easy for the people to identify his companions.

On entering the house the Deputies closed the shutters, bolted the doors, and carefully laid their plans. At the inn they had gathered that first Baudot and Treilhard, and then Tallien and Ysabeau, had been sent as representatives on mission to stamp

out the insurrection in Bordeaux. The two latter had arrived during the last few days, and had at once set to work with a ferocity which had already struck terror to the hearts of the people. At first they had resisted, but on hearing of the flight of the Girondist leaders, they had submitted; and now at Bordeaux, as in so many other towns, terror was the order of the day.

Scarcely able to believe their ears, the fugitives sent Guadet and Pétion to Bordeaux for definite news. They returned on the morrow, lucky to have entered and escaped from the town without molestation. They brought full confirmation of the worst. Panic had entered into the souls of the people, and the two Girondists were not only unable to get temporary shelter, but experienced the greatest difficulty in finding a man sufficiently courageous to act as their guide.

At all costs, it was necessary to find a safe retreat, where they could wait for better times, or, at the worst, until an opportunity occurred of escaping to America. Guadet volunteered to go to Saint-Émilion, his birthplace, and the home of all his relatives, confidently pledging himself to find a refuge for all among his family and neighbours. He set out forthwith, promising to send for them at Dupeyrat's house with the least possible delay. He fully expected to be back by the evening of the next day.

But the arrival of Guadet and his companions had become the talk of the place; and the innkeeper, a furious Jacobin, wanted to know what had become of them. An anonymous friend tried to assure him

that the strangers who had aroused his suspicion had already left by boat. But mine host was not to be put off; and having satisfied himself that they were still hiding in Dupeyrat's house, went to Bordeaux to denounce them.

Thus the six fugitives passed the day of September 26th in an agony of suspense. At nightfall they heard that the innkeeper had returned, accompanied by several strangers. Still Guadet did not come. Every moment added to their peril; yet it was impossible to leave the house without grave risk of missing him. They barricaded the doors and windows, and distributed their weapons, which consisted of fourteen pistols, five sword-sticks, and one musket. Then, whilst Louvet and Barbaroux kept watch, the four others lay down in their clothes to sleep.

The night passed without incident, and on the evening of the 27th Guadet sent to inform them that he could find places for only two of his friends; he was searching everywhere, he said, and hoped to be able to send for the others later.

The situation was becoming desperate. Barbaroux, who always rose to an occasion such as the present, refused to leave his companions. "If we have to die," said he, "let us at least die together."

He proposed that they should start at once for Saint-Émilion. While he was yet speaking a breathless messenger burst into the room, warning them of the hostile preparations of an assembly of people at the inn, and of the sudden appearance in the village of a large number of soldiers and officers. There

presence spread panic among the rustics, who took them for brigands.

Guadet had at first hoped to find shelter for his friends under his father's hospitable roof; but he was again disappointed, for on proceeding thither he narrowly escaped capture by a party of Jacobins, who watched the house night and day.

For some time Louvet and his companions met with no better fortune. After walking for four hours they lost their way. Near by stood a house, which they correctly took to be a presbytery. Knocking at the door, which was opened by the priest himself, Louvet said he and his comrades were travellers who had lost their way. For a few seconds the priest looked steadily at the wayfarers without speaking, and then replied:

"Confess that you are good men flying from your persecutors, and as such I heartily welcome you to rest for twenty-four hours in my house. Would I could oftener and longer protect the victims of injustice!"

Deeply moved by this reception, the fugitives confessed all. At the names of Barbaroux and Louvet, we are told, the good *curé* rushed into their arms and—— Need I say more? Nature has endowed the Frenchman with sensitive lachrymal glands; but this is a physical, not a moral defect—a subject for commiseration rather than pleasantry.

Next morning their host said they might safely stay with him two or three days longer, and, in the meantime, he would do his best to find a safe retreat for them. On the same day Valady's friend started

for Périgueux, where he had relatives. As this town is nearly forty miles on the road to Paris, Louvet wished to accompany him, and it was only on the earnest entreaty of Barbaroux that he abandoned the project. Valady's friend was arrested in the environs of Périgueux and summarily executed.

The priest sheltered the survivors yet another two days, and then led them to a small farm-house, where they were kindly received; but the farmer's wife becoming alarmed, they were obliged to remove next day.

The *curé* next concealed them in a hayloft, over the stable of another farm, where there was a family of sixteen. Only two of these persons were in the secret; the rest went backwards and forwards to the stable at all hours, and sometimes mounted the ladder to look at the hay in which the Girondists were concealed. The hay was new, and consequently hot. Moreover, it was packed to within two feet of the roof, and the loft, except for a tiny window, was without ventilation. Although the month was October, the weather was unusually hot and dry. To add to the misery of the refugees, their two confidants were sent away on business so suddenly, that they were unable to give warning of their absence. The men were away for three days. For forty-eight hours the outlaws were without food or drink. The stuffy atmosphere gave them violent headaches; they fainted with sickness, and were tortured with thirst. One day Louvet felt that he could support his misery no longer. Seizing a pistol, he smiled at Barbaroux, who followed his example.

The two men silently clasped hands. At that moment Valady, who had been watching them, cried :

" Barbaroux, think of thy mother ! Louvet, remember that Lodoïska awaits thee ! "

That was enough. The weapons fell from their hands.

Louvet was eager to set out for Paris at once. He attempted to rise, but fell to the ground. He had forgotten that in their last nocturnal ramble he had fallen into a ditch and injured the cartilage of his leg. The sufferings of the last few days had aggravated the ill, and now it was only with the greatest pain and difficulty that he could move the limb. Happily for him, he was compelled to stay where he was.

The next night at ten o'clock, when all was quiet in the farm except for the house-dog, whose barking had hindered them from sleeping, they heard footsteps and hurried whispering in the stable below. A moment later someone cautiously mounted the ladder. The fugitives seized their weapons.

A man's head appeared at the trap-door. It proved to be one of their confidants. But his manner had undergone a complete change.

" Gentlemen, come down," he said in a surly tone.

" Why ? " asked Louvet.

" Because you must."

" But why ? "

" You are wanted."

" Who wants us ? "

" The priest's kinsman."

" If so, why does he not show himself ? "

Here the fellow muttered something which sounded anything but complimentary. Then with an unprintable expletive, much favoured by Père Duchesne, he added:

"Anyhow, you blackguards have got to come down."

The fugitives thought their last hour had come, and silently prepared for death.

"Citizen," said Louvet firmly, "though we do not wish to get you into trouble with the authorities, do not think to lead us into a trap; we shall certainly not come down until we see the priest's kinsman, or until you tell us frankly what you intend to do."

The priest's relative now appeared, and explained that one of the farm hands had overheard voices in the hay-loft and had spoken of his suspicions. This had so frightened the farmer, that he had at once gone to the *curé* to demand their instant departure from his premises. The *curé* was unable to receive them into his house, as information had already been lodged against him, and he was under suspicion of sheltering the refugees. As the farmer insisted on their leaving the hay-loft forthwith, there was no help for it but to pass the night where they could.

It was raining in torrents and they were without shelter. Louvet dragged himself along with the aid of a stick. The guide conducted the unhappy men to a small wood, and there left them, scarcely concealing his joy at being rid of such compromising companions.

A little before dawn the *curé* returned to tell them

that his search had been fruitless, and as it was impossible to remain undiscovered where they were, he generously urged them to come back to his house, where he would protect them, cost what it might.

And now appeared on the scene one of those calm, heroic women, whose deeds so often brighten the pages of French history. Guadet's father-in-law, Dupeyrat, an old man of seventy-seven, had written to his daughter, Thérèse Bouquey, then living with her husband at Fontainebleau, describing the terrible situation of the outlawed Deputies. He told how they were being tracked like wolves from lair to lair; how they were without guides, often without food, without hope in the world; and how with bleeding feet they dragged themselves from friend to friend, begging for shelter, only to find all doors shut in their faces.*

On hearing these things, Mme. Bouquey's heart was wrung with pity, and her anger rose hot against her cowardly compatriots. After that, there was no rest for her in Paris. Leaving her husband, she journeyed post-haste to Saint-Émilion, where she had a country house, and soon found means of informing Guadet and Salle of her arrival. They came, but brought sad news of Louvet, Barbaroux and Valady, who had been compelled to leave the *curé*, and had since been unable to find a retreat.† "Let them all three come," said Mme. Bouquey; "but it would be

* Vatel, *Charlotte de Corday et les Girondins.*

† Hérissay, *Buzot.*
Lenotre, *Vieilles maisons, vieux papiers,* iii.

From an engraving by Baudran, after the painting by Yvon.

MADAME BOUQUEY

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well to warn them against coming by day." The three proscripts arrived on the following night, staggering with fatigue, their shoeless feet covered with blood and their clothes in tatters.

A few days later Buzot and Pétion sent word that they had been forced to change their hiding-place seven times within a fortnight, and were now "reduced to the last extremity." "Let them come too," said the heroic woman.

Madame Bouquey was at this time thirty-one years of age. She was of an eager, buoyant and sympathetic nature. She was not a pretty woman. In her, as in so many Frenchwomen, vivacity and charm of expression caused an undeniable plainness of countenance to pass unnoticed. "She had," said Buzot, "one of those faces that you see without surprise, but that you leave with regret."

Her portrait, painted about three years after her marriage, shows a homely young housewife, sitting up stiffly in all the modest finery of her out-of-date wedding-dress. Her only ornament is a plain gold cross, suspended on her breast by a black ribbon passing round her neck. Her abundant hair is dressed in the elaborate style of the preceding decade, surmounted by a round felt hat, which does not suit her in the least. The features are regular, but undistinguished. The whole of her personality is, as it were, centred in her eyes: soft, black eyes they are, full of intelligence, sweetness and goodness. It is easy to see that in sitting for her first portrait she has a lively sense of the dignity proper to such a situation, and she is obviously doing her best to suppress the

smile, which on less ceremonial occasions naturally played on her rather wide, good-humoured mouth. Yet, on the whole, it is a strong face, not without predication of a hot temper.

She had married Robert Bouquey, *procureur du roi*, at Saint-Émilion in 1781. He was a commonplace fellow enough; yet Thérèse, asking little of life, was perfectly happy. She was known familiarly as "Marinette." *

Soon after Guadet had taken her sister to wife he used his influence with Roland, then Minister of the Interior, to procure for his brother-in-law the post of registrar of the national domains, with apartments at Fontainebleau, where Thérèse was still living when she hastened to the rescue of the proscribed Girondists.

It was at midnight, on October 12th, 1793, that Mme. Bouquey assembled the seven outlaws at her house. She received them with tears of joy, which soon gave place to characteristic gaiety, when she saw how they shook off their despondency, as they sat down to the excellent supper she had prepared for them. Before the meal was over hope had again sprung up in their hearts.

Saint-Émilion is a quiet country town set on a hill. At the time of the Revolution, however, it was quite an important centre; and except for one circumstance, they could scarcely have chosen a more dangerous hiding-place. But the hill on which the town stands is pierced in every direction by vast galleries and abandoned quarries, of fabulous antiquity, which had supplied the stone used in the

* Vatel. Lenotre.

building of Bordeaux and of Saint-Émilion itself. By a happy chance, the dwelling of the Bouqueys communicated with these subterranean caverns, and to this fact the Girondists owed their lives. The house, which is still standing, lies hidden away between the Rue des Grands-Bancs and the Rue de la République (then known as the Rue du Chapitre), under the shadow of the great collegiate church, and now forms part of the establishment of the Frères de la Doctrine Chrétienne. Apart from this nothing is changed. The white marble chimney-piece in the comfortable parlour still bears the interlaced initials of Robert Bouquey.

There are two ways of descending into the caverns. The first and easier method is by ladder down a disused water-chute; but the outlaws were seldom able to avail themselves of this means, as the descent is exposed to observation from the windows of the adjoining houses. The second method was that which the fugitives generally employed, and a very perilous method it was.

In the garden, opposite the kitchen window, is a square well, a hundred feet deep, and in the masonry of two of the opposite sides a series of superimposed holes have been cut, about two feet apart. These rude steps are always wet and slippery; but by carefully moving the feet from niche to niche, and supporting themselves by the hands against the sides of the well, the outlaws were able to descend to a depth of twenty feet below the surface, where there is a large recess opening into a spacious cavern, which is, in turn, undermined by a deeper

cave, reached by slipping through a hole. The visitor's blood runs cold at the very idea of this gymnastic feat, which the unhappy men were reduced to performing every day.*

The Girondists breathed the fœtid air of this dank and icy grotto for a whole month. Mme. Bouquey did all she could for them. She sent down mattresses, linen, blankets, a table, chairs, knives, forks, spoons, a lantern, and, with true motherly forethought, a warming-pan for their beds. For those who were unable to support the chilly atmosphere of the grotto (and Louvet was one of these) she contrived a warmer and more salubrious, though less safe retreat, in the house itself; whence at the first alarm the outlaws sprang across the garden, scrambled over the parapet of the well and lowered themselves into their cavern.

How to feed these seven hungry young men was a problem which every day puzzled her ingenious brain. There was famine in the land. Each person in the district had his allotted rations, and to attempt to obtain more from the local tradesmen was often a matter for the executioner. Again and again she risked her life in the attempt. Ostensibly living alone, she was entitled to no more than one pound of bread a day. In order to save breakfasting the outlaws rose at midday, when Mme. Bouquey sent down to them by means of a hooked cord a tureen of strong vegetable soup; that had to suffice them until evening. At

* Guadet (J.) *Les Girondins*, vol. ii.
Vatel (C.) *Charlotte de Corday et les Girondins*, vol. iii.
Lenotre (G.) *Vieilles maisons, vieux papiers*, sér. iii.

nightfall they quietly crept up into the house and gathered round her table for supper. This was the principal meal of the day, and consisted of a small piece of meat, obtained with the greatest difficulty; or a chicken, so long as her poultry lasted; vegetables from the garden; eggs, until they had eaten all the chickens that laid them, and a little milk. They noticed that their hostess partook but very sparingly of this food, protesting that she was not hungry. "She sat in our midst," says Louvet, "like a mother surrounded by her children, for whom she delighted to sacrifice herself." At these gatherings she chatted merrily, and always bore herself as one without a care in the world. When they were depressed (as very often happened), she cheered them with brave words. Her soft, low voice soothed these desperate and hunted men like the sweetest music. Although the *sans-culottes* prowled about the town at all hours, swearing that they would burn alive in their houses all who were found concealing the Deputies, she was ever calm and unruffled. Although she knew that the most trivial accident might at any moment betray her to a horrible death, she always greeted her guests with smiling lips and outstretched, welcoming hands.

"*Mon Dieu!*" she gaily exclaimed on one occasion. "Let them come and search the house, provided that you do not take upon yourselves to receive them. The only thing I dread is lest they should arrest me, for what would become of you!"

It was in this retreat that Louvet began his memoirs, and Buzot, Pétion and Barbaroux completed

theirs. Early in November their protectress gently broke to them the news of the condemnation and execution of their colleagues in Paris. She told them how those twenty-one young men had gone to their death singing the *Marseillaise*. The unhappy survivors were overwhelmed with grief, and solemnly swore, if they lived, to avenge them. They had scarcely recovered from this shock when they heard of the no less heroic death of Mme. Roland. How they longed to strike down her cowardly assassins! Yet they were helpless. But for one of their number this last stroke was the end of all. Buzot's enemies had murdered the woman he adored. His frame shaken by dry sobs, he prayed for the end to come quickly, for his anguish was greater than he could bear. Yet he was compelled to hide his grief from his friends. Louvet alone shared his confidence, and had sworn never to reveal his secret. The trust was faithfully kept, and it was not until the finding of Mme. Roland's letters to Buzot, in 1863, that the object of the "Grande Citoyenne's" chaste passion was discovered.

Buzot at this time wrote that infinitely pathetic letter to his friend, Jerôme Le Tellier, covering Mme. Roland's portrait, and the manuscript of her memoirs, in which he tells of his misery:

"She is no more—she is no more, my friend! The scoundrels have assassinated her! Judge whether there remains anything on earth for me to regret! When you hear of my death, burn her letters. I scarcely know why I desire that you should keep the portrait for yourself. You were

equally dear to both of us. What poisons my last moments is the frightful picture of my wife's misery. In the name of our friendship, I pray you to help her and to give her the benefit of your counsel."

When he had written this, he handed the packet over to Mme. Bouquey, knowing that he could trust her to forward it to Le Tellier at Évreux, as soon as it was safe for his friend to receive it. Through no fault of Mme. Bouquey, as we may be sure, the packet never reached its destination. About the time of Buzot's death Le Tellier shot himself in prison in order to escape the guillotine, and the papers were afterwards found in her house and forwarded by the pro-consul Julien to the Committee of Public Safety.

The evening of November 13th brought a fresh calamity upon the outlaws. On their assembling for supper they found Mme. Bouquey in tears. Never before had she broken down in their presence. They tried to console her, but she would not be comforted. At last they learned the truth. Her husband and other relatives had insisted on her expelling the outlaws from the house. She could not for very shame tell them all the lies, threats and cowardly manœuvres which had been used to coerce her. She went from one to another of her guests, weeping bitterly. The heroic woman's grief was terrible to see.

"Cruel men!" she cried. "What wrong they do me! I shall never, never forgive them if one of you——" She could not finish the sentence.

The fugitives bade her farewell. Louvet and

Valady never saw her more. The others she sheltered yet again, and this time it cost her her life. On June 17th, 1794, she was denounced, and on her house being searched traces of the outlaws were discovered. At the trial on the same day she was fearfully angry with the judges for condemning her and her family, because, as she put it, "she had shown pity to the unfortunate." She overwhelmed them with infamy and contempt. "Monsters!" she shrieked, "if humanity is a crime, we deserve death!"

When the verdict was pronounced she rushed like a mad woman at the President, "as though she would tear him in pieces," and she was dragged from the court foaming with rage. Later, when the executioner's assistants came to cut her hair, she struggled so fiercely that "it was necessary to employ violence to hold her." Guadet's father thereupon took her in his arms and she fell sobbing on his breast.

Her life closed with yet another act of heroism. The executioner afterwards stated that at the foot of the scaffold, "Bouquey, seeing his wife advance alone towards the fatal plank, said to one of the assistants, 'Ah! give Madame your hand.' But she quite calmly, earnestly desired to be executed the last, wishing to spare her husband the grief of seeing his wife's blood shed." *

* *See* Lenotre (G.,) *Vieilles maisons, vieux papiers*, sér. iii.

CHAPTER XXIII

The Girondists' Odyssey continued—Louvet bids farewell to Barbaroux, Buzot and Pétion—Valady's fate—Louvet accompanies Guadet and Salle—They hide in a cave—Guadet tries the quality of a friend—Louvet is taken ill—The closed door—Guadet's despair—Louvet's resolution—He sets out alone for Paris—Arrest and execution of Salle and Guadet—The fate of the Guadet family—Providential escape of the Deputy's wife—The last days of Barbaroux, Buzot and Pétion—Agony and death of Barbaroux—Suicide of Buzot and Pétion.

AT one o'clock on the morning of November 14th, the outlaws again took to the road. After solemnly vowing that those who survived the proscription would seek out and succour the families of those who perished, the friends affectionately embraced and divided into two parties. This time Barbaroux joined Buzot and Pétion; whilst Louvet, Guadet and Salle accompanied Valady for a short distance on the road to Périgueux, where he hoped to find refuge at the house of a relative. They bade him farewell at the cross-roads, and he went forward alone to meet his death. He had scarcely reached his destination when he was taken, and dragged to the scaffold.

Louvet and his two remaining friends passed the following day in an abandoned quarry. At night, although it was pouring with rain, they set out on a twelve-miles walk to the house of a lady, whose eternal gratitude Guadet had won some years before by

extricating her from a criminal prosecution which had greatly endangered her honour and the credit of her family. He was convinced that she would willingly shelter them for a few days, as she had again and again proffered him her services.

Having missed their way, it was four o'clock in the morning when they reached their journey's end, covered from head to foot with mud, wet to the skin, and utterly spent with fatigue.

Guadet knocked at the door, which, after a delay of nearly half an hour, was partially opened by a servant, who failed to recognize the visitor, although he had seen him hundreds of times. After some hesitation, the man took Guadet's message to his mistress. He returned after a prolonged delay, bringing word that his mistress found it impossible to grant the request, as there was a vigilance committee in the village. As though she did not know that there was a vigilance committee in every village ! Guadet persisted, and begged Madame to grant him a short interview. That also was impossible ; in fact, all things were impossible, and the door was shut in his face.

Meanwhile Louvet and Salle had retired to a small wood near by to await the result of the conference. They were drenched to the skin, and so cold that Louvet's teeth " chattered in his head."

When Guadet came to tell them how he had been received, Louvet scarcely heard what he said. He was immediately after seized with a fit of shivering and fell senseless to the ground. His companions at length succeeded in bringing him round, helped

him to his feet, and rested him against the trunk of a tree; but he was too weak to stand, so they were obliged to let him lie at full length on the rain-sodden earth.

Guadet now ran back to the house and again knocked at the door; but this time there was no reply. He called through the keyhole:

"One of my friends is taken ill; I beg of you to give us a room and a fire, if only for a couple of hours."

"Impossible!"

"Then at least give me a little vinegar and a glass of water."

"Impossible!"

The woman deserved to hear Guadet's opinion of her conduct—he was an eloquent man. Thus the women, like the men of the period, were not all cast in the heroic mould; and many a man, like poor Bouquey, died on the scaffold because he had married a heroine unawares.

Guadet was in despair, and his lamentations aroused Louvet from the stupor into which he had fallen. Although he could not yet speak, he rose, and listened whilst his comrades considered the best means of returning to their cave. The situation was alarming enough, for day was about to break. Guadet's friends had been tried and found wanting; but Louvet flattered himself that his friends were of a different calibre, and he determined to go to them, though he had to traverse the whole of France to reach them. He walked with his companions as far as the high-road, about a mile distant, and then said:

" My friends, I am sorry to leave you in this predicament ; but, as I have often told you, I think there are straits in which a man ought not to drag on the burden of existence. You also know my determination to set off for Paris, instead of blowing out my brains, directly I reached an extremity in which I think a brave man may die. . . I know I have a very poor chance of getting there, but it is my duty to attempt it. . . My Lodoïska shall find that when I fell my face was turned towards her."

In vain his friends begged and implored him to give up a project which they assured him would lead to certain death. He shared what paper money he had with Salle, who was even poorer than himself, warmly embraced his companions, and began his perilous walk towards Paris.

After untold sufferings Salle and Guadet were arrested on June 17th, 1794. On the afternoon of the same day they perished on the scaffold with Mme. Bouquey, her father, her husband, and her little maid-servant, and the whole family of the Guadets, except the Deputy's young wife, who was ill of the smallpox when the soldiers came to arrest her.* " Then it will be for another time," said Lacombe, the president of the tribunal, when the matter was reported to him. But he reckoned without the 9th Thermidor, when his own head was required of him. Mme. Guadet and her little daughter Lodoïska, and her nephew, survived the Revolution,

* Saint-Brice Guadet, the Deputy's brother, was executed a month later.

and the latter afterwards wrote a valuable history of his uncle and his colleagues of the Girondist party.

Meanwhile Buzot, Barbaroux and Pétion had for five months been hiding in a dirty garret in the house of a man named Troquart, a wig-maker, at the corner of the Grande Rue—now Rue Guadet—and the Rue Cap-du-Pont, a retreat which they owed to the untiring efforts of Mme. Bouquey, who, until the day of her arrest, had continued to feed them. It was from the window of this stuffy and unwholesome den that they saw the tumbril pass bearing their benefactress and their last friends to the guillotine. The sight filled them with horror. They bitterly reproached themselves with her death. After that they found it impossible to stay in the house. They seem to have lost their heads. That night, when all was quiet in the terror-stricken town, they left their retreat.

From this point their story is harrowing to the last degree. All that is known or is ever likely to be known, of their last moments, has been piously collected by M. Lenotre, and admirably told in his *Vieilles Maisons, Vieux Papiers*, which has recently been translated under the title of *Romances of the French Revolution*. Suffice it to say that on June 18th the three outlaws were seated in a field eating their last provisions, when they were startled by the sound of a drum and the heavy tramp of a body of troops. Springing to their feet, they made a dash for a small pine wood at the other side of the field. Buzot and Pétion succeeded in reaching it, but

Barbaroux, a heavily built man, finding himself outpaced by his companions, and unwilling to hinder them, drew a pistol from his belt, and putting it against his right ear, fired. The shot startled the soldiers, who would otherwise have passed without suspicion, and they cautiously made for the field to see what had happened. There they found the body of a big man, with a frightful wound in the head, "breathing heavily and tossing about as though in the death agony." They grouped themselves around him, none attempting to dress his wound or to help him in any way, for he was at once suspected of being an *émigré*, and terror had long ago stamped all pity out of most men's hearts. Barbaroux lay there, without shelter and bathed in blood, throughout the heat of a summer's day. Death refused to release him.

At three o'clock in the afternoon some municipal officers arrived on the scene. They ordered him to be carried to a neighbouring farm; but the farmer, doubtless fearing the drastic laws anent the sheltering of outlaws, not only refused to receive him, but denied him a glass of water to quench his raging thirst, or a little straw on which to lay his dying head. Such was the gratitude of the Sovereign People for one of their most fearless and disinterested defenders.

At last four men seized the wounded Deputy and unceremoniously dragged him to the Bordeaux high-road, and seated him on a chair, lent by a peasant. The rabble clamoured around him, speculating as to who he could be. Someone asked him if he was Buzot. He faintly shook his head. Barbaroux?

He nodded. About this time Lavache, a former Mayor of Castillon, a fussy, meddlesome old fool, came up and, thrusting the spectators aside, began to question the wounded man. For long he received no reply; but at last Barbaroux opened his eyes, and told him he was "meddling in what did not concern him," and that he had "neither the capacity nor the authority" to question him. At this somebody laughed, and the little man trotted off, quite extinguished.

It was four o'clock when his tormentors made the first move towards conducting their prisoner to Castillon, and they took nearly two hours to accomplish the journey. After six days spent in the prison of that town, Barbaroux was fastened to a mattress and carried by boat down the river to Bordeaux. A week later the guillotine put an end to his martyrdom.

On hearing Barbaroux' shot behind them, Buzot and Pétion, as we have seen, made a dash for the small pine wood, which they succeeded in reaching. How they died is unknown; but the probability is that, reduced to the last extremity and unwilling to continue the fearful existence of the last months, they took their own lives. Practically all we know on this point is that on June 25th, a peasant, named Béchaud, happening to pass by the spot where Barbaroux had been found, heard some dogs fiercely growling in an adjoining rye field. The man left the path probably to see the sport. His approach disturbed three gaunt dogs, savagely fighting over two human bodies, already horribly torn, which lay half hidden among

the rye. Proud of his discovery, the peasant at once communicated with the municipal authorities. The dead men were soon identified as Buzot and Pétion ; but the bodies were in such a shocking condition that the sanitary officer refused to examine them. Graves were immediately dug and the corpses unceremoniously pitchforked into them. A perfunctory report on the matter was dispatched to the Convention, and the incident was considered closed.*

To this day, the field in which the unhappy Deputies were found is known as the Champs des Émigrés. True, they had emigrated ; but it was to another and better world ; or, at all events, it could not very well have been a worse.

* Guadet, *Les Girondins*, vol. ii.
Lenotre, *Vieilles maisons, vieux papiers*, sér. iii.
Vatel, *Charlotte de Corday et les Girondins*, vol. iii.

From an engraving by Baudran, after the portrait carried by Madame Roland.

BUZOT.

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CHAPTER XXIV

Louvet reaches Montpont—Negotiating a sentry—A critical moment—*Qui vive !*—Fabricating a passport—Crippled with rheumatism—A sympathetic landlady—An embarrassing compliment—He steals through Mussidan—Almost collapses on the road—He falls among enemies—A churlish innkeeper and his wife—Louvet plays the *sans-culotte*—He prepares for the worst—Hoodwinking the Mayor—The Procureur-Syndic—Louvet calls for more wine—The passport—A desperate game—The landlady loses her blood money—Louvet breathes freely again—Another hostile innkeeper—Louvet is befriended by a carrier—A restless night and a hopeless dawn—He overtakes the carrier—He accepts a seat in the cart—An explanation—A sudden peril, and how he met it—Louvet's "passport"—The carrier uses his whip.

LOUVET parted from his friends about four miles from Montpont, the chief town of the district, and therefore a dangerous place for him. He determined to pass it during the night. His limbs were still so benumbed that he had the greatest difficulty in walking, and his progress was slow. The exercise, however, did him good, and he was soon quite free from pain.

The sun was rising when he reached Montpont. As he approached the gate, he saw a sentry on duty, leaning against the wall, motionless; it seemed that the man watched him intently. He slackened his pace and advanced softly, holding his forged passport ready, intending to present it airily for inspection if demanded. There was nothing, he reflected, but a transparent forgery and the hypo-

thetical stupidity of the man at the gate between him and an ugly death. It was an uncomfortable five minutes. He caught his breath as he reached the sentinel's side. The man did not speak. Louvet glanced quickly at him. He was asleep! The muzzle of his gun rested against his breast, the butt-end on the ground, opposing the way. Louvet stepped lightly over the weapon, still walking softly. At the end of the street he quickened his pace. This woke the sentry, and he called out twice: "Who goes there?" But the fugitive did not wait to explain matters. He hurried safely through the town, but about a mile further on he was arrested by a sharp pain shooting through his heel, and extending under the sole of his foot. With the greatest difficulty he walked another mile, and then found it impossible to proceed further. At a roadside inn he secured a room, a fire, and an excellent breakfast, of which he stood in great need.

After satisfying his hunger, he set to work on the improvement of his passport, which a friend of the *curé* had fabricated for him. This document was covered with an amazing assortment of signatures, and certified that Citizen Larcher, a good *sans-culotte*, of Rennes, had passed through various towns and villages on his way to Paris. But the last town mentioned was Bordeaux, so Louvet ventured to embellish the document with the name of the President of the Committee of Surveillance at Libourne, which he happened to remember. When he had done with it, the passport might pass muster in the villages, but was worse than useless for the towns, as there

were no official seals of the districts named, and at that time everything coming from Bordeaux was regarded with the greatest suspicion. It was, therefore, imperative that towns should be avoided altogether, if possible; or that if they had to be traversed, it should be either at dawn or dusk, care being taken to sleep only in small villages. Even so, the risk of arousing suspicion was very great; but for this there was no help.

In the afternoon the traveller set out for Mussidan, six miles distant, intending to pass the night at a village two miles beyond that town. He was still tortured with rheumatism, and the pain soon became so acute that each step doubled him almost to the ground. The leg swelled, burnt like fire, and felt prodigiously heavy. To add to the difficulty, the road, owing to the heavy rain, was in some places little better than a slough, and in others covered with rough flints, over which he walked as on hot coals. His progress was so painful that he was covered in perspiration, and was obliged to halt every few minutes to rest on his sound leg, supporting his weight on a staff. When night overtook him he was still a mile short of Mussidan.

Thoroughly exhausted, he limped into a wayside inn to pass the night. The host and hostess, a frank, worthy couple, shocked at the sight of his condition, did all they could to make him comfortable, and to ease the intolerable pain of his leg. He had at once succeeded in arousing their interest and compassion. In the public room a band of noisy revolutionists were making merry. The hostess, seeming to divine that

the new-comer desired to avoid such company, drew him aside, offering to give up her own bed to him; adding, with a significant glance towards the public room, that he would at least be quiet there. Louvet was completely won over by the kindness of these good people, and determined to stay with them for a couple of days, hoping that the complete rest would cure him. His hosts were evidently gratified at the confidence he had placed in them, and redoubled their kind attentions. They took the greatest care not to disquiet him, and constantly shielded him from the prying eyes of his fellow guests. Once the landlady glanced at his tattered clothes, saying:

"Ah, sir, it is easy to see that you have been accustomed to dress better than this!"

It was an embarrassing sort of compliment, for it hinted that he had not yet acquired the air of the genuine *sans-culotte*—an appearance which he determined to assume with the least possible delay.

On the evening of the second day he sorrowfully quitted this sympathetic couple in order to reach Mussidan at dusk. He entered the town in safety, but half-way through the main street on the right stood a guard-house. Watching his opportunity, the fugitive slipped by behind some waggons on the left. A mile further on his leg grew worse than ever. It took him two hours to cover a mile and a half. He nearly collapsed in the road. Some peasants, of whom he had asked the way, conducted him to a dirty village inn. The master, a surly-looking fellow, came to the door and examined the wayfarer suspiciously.

"Where did you pick him up?" he demanded of

the peasants in a *patois* which Louvet fortunately understood.

" Faith, on the road."

" Well, I'm thinking we'll jolly soon send him back there," he grunted.

Disguising his apprehension, Louvet hobbled across the threshold, followed by the innkeeper, who lighted his pipe, flung himself into a chair between his guest and the fire, and smoked and spat alternately, without uttering a word. The wife, a thin, acrid little woman, with that unpleasant twist in the look which you will sometimes see in the eyes of a vicious horse, now entered the room and began to question Louvet in an insidious manner. At once on his guard, he assumed the part of a furious Jacobin.

Whilst eating the omelette he had ordered, the woman stood by his side, talking and questioning incessantly. How sorry she was for those good noblemen, those poor priests, and those worthy merchants who were being dragged by the score to the guillotine ! What did the citizen think of Charlotte Corday and the odious Marat ?—for her part, she thought hanging too good for such wretches as he. At this, Louvet pretended to fall into a violent passion, and threatened her with the scaffold in the approved manner of Père Duchesne. But the little woman was not to be bluffed ; she was not in the least disconcerted by this outburst, and continued to ask perfidious questions, whilst the fugitive Deputy as sedulously played the furious *sans-culotte.*

It was midnight when she allowed him to retire to his room, where he reflected on his perilous situation.

It was clear to him that he had fallen among enemies, and that the landlady had an eye on the hundred livres offered by the Government for information leading to the arrest of *émigrés*, and other outlawed persons. He went to bed in his clothes, putting a brace of pocket-pistols and the blunderbuss Lodoïska had given him under his pillow. These would at least enable him to give a good account of himself in case of surprise; and if it came to the worst, he had, hidden next his skin, a quantity of opium, a present from his versatile friend of Quimper—a last and effective means of eluding all his enemies. There was some comfort in that thought, so he turned over and went to sleep.

The night unexpectedly passed without incident, and it was nine o'clock in the morning when the landlady woke him to ask if he was ready to go. He replied that he was so comfortable in her house that he proposed to dine with her. It was certainly no fault of hers that he ever dined again, for whilst he was finishing his meal she went out, saying that he could pay her when she came back. She returned almost immediately, bringing a huge country yokel, proud of the magistracy which, nevertheless, embarrassed him.

"This is the citizen, our Mayor," said the landlady, with a malicious glance at the traveller. "He has come to look at your passport."

Louvet immediately produced it, and coolly resumed his dinner. By the awkward manner in which the Mayor handled the document, the fugitive gathered that he could scarcely read.

"Where is the seal?"

Louvet pointed to a stamp which it bore, adding that in his country that was the only manner of sealing, and he immediately launched out on a discussion of the merits of that method, interspersed with a selection of his best stories, and anecdotes of his life and adventures. The narrative was frequently interrupted by large bumpers of the landlady's wine, which he had just ordered, that the Citizen Mayor might do him the signal honour of drinking with him. Nothing loath, the Citizen Mayor honoured him so much and so frequently that he was soon in such a jovial state that any sort of passport would have satisfied him. So far, so good. But the hostess was determined not to lose her hundred livres.

"I will go and fetch the Citizen Procureur Syndic," said she; "he can read any writing off-hand."

This worthy soon strode into the room, and was received as one with whose conspicuous merit the traveller had long been acquainted. Louvet called for more wine, and the Mayor begged him to repeat one of his last stories for the benefit of the newcomer. This naturally led to a second, a third, and then many others; the two villagers were soon jingling glasses, amid roars of laughter, with the man they had come to arrest. Meanwhile, Louvet filled their glasses incessantly, taking care to drink as little as possible himself. By degrees, however, he too grew rather merry, and, of course, became so much the better company. His stories growing more and more diverting made the countrymen almost die of laughing. They had long forgotten all about the passport,

of which, however, Louvet often reminded them, for the eyes of the landlady were constantly upon him. Again and again, in the midst of his tales, he would negligently lay it on the table before him for a few moments, and as absently slip it back into his pocket-book. Thus, although the magistrates had many glimpses of it, they had not an opportunity of actually examining it. Indeed, the more Louvet spoke, the less desire they showed to look over his papers. How was it possible to doubt the patriotism of a dirty, out-at-elbows rascal, who bawled, and swore, and roared with the best of them ?

But the landlady was so enraged at what she saw, that she went off to seek a municipal officer by way of reinforcement. Louvet forced him also to drink and laugh, and laugh and drink again ; he, too, saw the passport, as the others had done—afar off. The jade now thinking perhaps only of selling her wine, brought in two more recruits. But as they entered Louvet rose to pay the reckoning. The woman tried to make him pay double, but he roundly told her to go to the devil, at the same time offering her his passport, which he declared was sound enough to take her to that or any other destination. None present ventured to dispute this bold assertion, and the Mayor, who had seen the paper, was ready to vouch for its genuineness, though with less assurance than his two companions, who had not seen it.

Overwhelmed by their compliments and good wishes, Louvet ordered another quart of wine, and after drinking a glass to the health of the new-comers, paid his score and took his leave, much to the regret

of the whole company, not excepting the landlady, who had now to relinquish all hope of the blood-money for which she had worked so hard.

Taking to the open road, the outlaw breathed freely once more. He had a day's respite. From the crest of a hill on the morrow he saw the sun shining on the roofs of Périgueux—a dangerous place. He thought of Valady's unfortunate friend ; of Valady's own fate there he was happily ignorant. He took the road to Limoges, which passes through a suburb of the town. It was very dark, and he was overcome with fatigue when he reached the hamlet of Les Tavernes, two miles beyond Périgueux.

The keeper of the village inn was just going to bed when Louvet knocked at the door, He had scarcely asked for a lodging, when he was ordered to produce his passport. The man at once observed that it had no *visa* from the chief town of the district.

" I see it is from Libourne," he remarked ; " otherwise I should have stopped you at once. But why did you pass by Périgueux without presenting yourself to the magistrates ? To-morrow you will have to go back."

Louvet tried to put a good face on the matter, merely saying that the only objection he had to going back to Périgueux was that of unnecessarily lengthening his journey, which to a man in his state of health was a serious matter. He had thought it both unnecessary and impracticable, he said, to have his papers attested at every town he happened to pass near. To this the fellow replied :

" Anyhow, you'll have to go back."

At this point a public carrier, who happened to be in the room, good-naturedly took Louvet's part, saying that it was barbarous to make a sick man return to the chief town simply because he had forgotten to get his papers attested. If travellers, he declared, are to be subjected to such annoyances, everybody will stay at home, and then what will become of innkeepers, carriers, the country and its trade? This timely support served in a measure to pacify the landlord; yet it was clear that he regarded his guest with as much suspicion as ever. He served him with a piece of brown bread and a cup of wine for supper. The honest carrier was evidently rather disgusted at the man's churlish behaviour, and offered Louvet part of the chicken he was eating. The two men thereupon began to talk, and the outlaw soon gathered that his new friend held the present Government in the utmost detestation. He was going to Limoges on the morrow with a cartload of goods, and very civilly offered to take Louvet with him, unless the landlord really insisted on his returning to Périgueux.

On conducting Louvet to his garret, the landlady surprised him by demanding the money (ten sous) in advance for his supper and lodging; but, all things considered, this was a compliment on the convincing manner in which he had played the part of a Jacobin of the period.

But the hostile bearing of the landlord had so much alarmed him that, tired as he was, he could not sleep, and for hours lay tossing about in bed. Towards morning, however, he fell into a heavy slumber, and

woke up to find that the carrier had started a good hour before. To crown all, his precious store of opium had got shifted from its position during the restless night, and was nowhere to be found. For long he searched for it in vain, and when at length he found it, his joy was as great as that of the widow on the recovery of her mite.

On limping out of doors, Louvet found the innkeeper already in the saddle, and as he rode off he called over his shoulder :

" I wish you a pleasant journey. I'm off to Périgueux ! "

This parting shot sent the fugitive on his way with a heavy heart, for he thought the words were merely a blind, and that the man had in reality gone off to the next town to denounce him. From time to time he inquired of persons whom he met on the road whether they had seen a man answering to his description of the landlord.

" Yes," said one of the travellers, " I met him a few minutes ago ; you will soon overtake him, for he put up at the village you see at the foot of the hill."

Fully persuaded that the man had acted the traitor, he thought the only alternative was to return to Périgueux and to present himself to the municipality, hoping that his apparently voluntary act might create a good impression. Having determined on this course of action, he sorrowfully retraced his steps towards the dreaded town. He had not proceeded far before he met the friendly carrier, whom he had previously overtaken.

" Have you lost anything ? " asked he.

"Alas! yes, my time and labour. I am going back to Périgueux. That man has gone to betray me."

"Which man?"

"The innkeeper. I saw him ride by in a grey coat a little while ago, mounted on a black horse. He has gone to Palissous yonder to denounce me; and I suppose he took you into his confidence, and told you not to warn me."

"You are quite mistaken. I saw the man you mention. It wasn't the innkeeper at all. If he dared do such a thing I would never put up at his house again."

The good man was so frank and sympathetic, and so honestly indignant at Louvet's suspicion, that the latter felt quite reassured.

"You are utterly unfit to go back to Périgueux," continued the carrier. "Just you get into my cart, and come and dine with me at Palissous. I promise nobody shall ask you awkward questions whilst you are with me. For I say again, as I said from the first, you don't look like a thief."

Without waiting for an explanation of this back-handed sort of compliment, Louvet climbed into the cart, and was soon rolling fairly comfortably on his way. At dinner the carrier opened his heart to his companion, and it soon transpired that the innkeeper had taken Louvet neither for an aristocrat, nor for a Girondist, but for a thief, and would have had him arrested as such had not the carrier persuaded him that he was wrong. Hence his suspicious and threatening bearing, which had alarmed

the fugitive, and his wife's demand for payment in advance. Henceforward the two men's confidence in each other grew apace. Louvet soon ventured on a denunciation of the Maratists, who, he said, were the real thieves and disturbers of the peace. This met with the carrier's hearty approval, for a gang of these rascals had shortly before robbed him of his horse, and the poor fellow was in mortal terror lest they should also rob him of his wife, to whom he was passionately attached. Louvet told him that he was a merchant of Bordeaux who had been hounded out of his home by these anarchists, and they were now seeking his head because he had boldly come forward and exposed their crimes.

Thus the dinner-hour slipped by quite pleasantly; and then Louvet paid the reckoning, and handed his conductor a paper order for fifty livres, begging him in future to make the payments for them both. They then resumed their journey, passing the night at a wayside inn.

The next morning at daybreak they passed through Thiviers, the chief town of the district; the fugitive lying hidden among the goods in the cart. Through the small towns and villages Louvet rode openly on bales of stuffs, with his lame leg wrapped up in a horse-cloth. Who could suspect that this wild-eyed young man, who looked like a volunteer just returning home from hospital on sick leave, was one of the famous proscribed Girondist Deputies, on whose head a price was set?

About four miles from Limoges this boldness brought him perilously near to disaster. The cart had just

entered the little town of Aixe-sur-Vienne, and as his companion had assured him that there was no guard there, Louvet had not hidden himself, when turning a corner suddenly brought them face to face with a sentry and twenty comrades, sunning themselves before a newly-erected guard-house.

"Citizen, your passport," cried the sentry, eyeing Louvet attentively.

Without a moment's hesitation, the outlaw lifted his lame leg.

"There it is, you little devil!" he cried. "Just you go where I've been and get yourself wounded by those thieves in La Vendée, and when you're coming back, your smashed leg will be a passport which will take you anywhere you please."

"Bravo! bravo! comrade!" yelled the delighted *sans-culottes*, clapping their hands. The sentry, quite taken aback, joined in the laugh, whilst the carrier gave Louvet the greatest proof of attachment by vigorously plying the whip, which till then he had not used.

CHAPTER XXV

Louvet and his companion reach Limoges—The carrier's home—His wife's trick—Louvet is passed on to another carrier—His new companions—At the mercy of strangers—A piquant situation—He wins the good-will of his fellow-passengers—A dangerous meeting—Louvet's coolness—Incident at Argenton—The Jacobin agent's missed opportunity—Louvet hears bad news—His fears for Lodoïska's safety—Bitter reflections on reaching Orléans—Stopped at the barrier—He gives himself up for lost—A hairbreadth escape—Adventure of the inquisitive Jacobin—Another narrow escape—He watches the triumph of an enemy—In the midst of alarms—Longjumeau—Strange incident at a *table d'hôte*—He hears one of his own songs—Paris at last.

ON the same evening, the travellers reached Limoges. Knowing that Louvet dared not put up at an inn, his companion took him to his own house. There he stayed for two days, scarcely stirring from his bed. The wife did all she could to restore his health, whilst her husband sought among his acquaintances for a man whom he could trust to carry his guest further on his journey. On the night of the third day, the carrier failing to return at his usual hour, his wife burst into Louvet's room, and in a confused and agitated manner stated that her husband had ordered her to take him immediately to a certain inn, where there were some carriers who would take him to Orléans.

"No, no," said Louvet, looking her in the eyes. "You must be mistaken, carriers never start at this time of night. Besides, there is a guard-house

close to the inn, which my good friend your husband has already told me to avoid. He himself will get me out of this difficulty: he has sworn to do so, and I trust him implicitly."

At these words she began to cry, and then confessed that, being frightened, she had invented the story in order to get him out of the house. She implored him not to tell her husband of her little trick. A moment later the carrier ran into the room with the good news that he had found a young man who would smuggle his guest through to Paris in next to no time—as loyal and discreet a fellow as ever was. He knew the traveller was "contraband goods."

At two o'clock in the morning, the carrier called his guest to partake of a substantial breakfast, and to drink a farewell glass. During the repast, Louvet gathered that the wife had become so terrified that she had refused to sleep at home, and her husband was consequently rather depressed, as he would not have another opportunity of seeing her until he returned from his next journey; still, as he said: "It was not often given him to save a good man's life." After filling his guest's pockets with bread, meat and fruit, he took him by a circuitous route, in order to avoid the guard-house and outposts, to an inn about a mile from the town, and handed him over to his new conductor. The two men then warmly embraced each other and separated.

Louvet found that the conveyance which was to take him the rest of his journey carried seven passengers beside himself. Apparently his new companions agreed on only one point: they were all

red-hot Jacobins. Such were the people who, solely to please the driver, were to keep the fugitive's secret, and, indeed, to run considerable personal risk on his account. It was clear that the journey would be an extremely hazardous one, for he was compelled to place himself absolutely at the mercy of these strangers. It was agreed upon among them that wherever passports were likely to be examined, Louvet should lie hidden at the bottom of the wagon covered by the great-coats of the men and the petticoats of their wives. Much depended on his winning the good will of all his companions, and to this task he at once set himself. By the second day his sprightliness and unfailing good humour had won all hearts.

On the afternoon of the third day, during a hard frost, Louvet, feeling his limbs benumbed with the cold, got down to walk by the side of a man who accompanied the caravan on horseback. They were passing through Le Bois-Remont, a village in the Department of Indre, consisting of five or six cottages, never dreaming of danger, when they came suddenly face to face with a National Guard. The outlaw calmly walked up to him, with the words:

"What are you doing here, comrade? Keeping yourself warm?"

"If you would have me warmer," laughed the sentinel, "you have only to bring me a glass of wine."

"With all my heart: I'll go and fetch one."

He returned to the inn, and sent one of his companions with the wine. Meanwhile, the soldier

examined the passports, but forgot to ask Louvet for his. The innkeeper informed them that on account of the near approach of the rebels of La Vendée, a guard had been placed at every village on the road to Paris. The news was scarcely encouraging, and the carrier looked grave, as, indeed, he well might. However, he drew the fugitive aside, and whispered :

" You manage these people splendidly ; go on as you are now doing, and don't be afraid of my flinching, I'd carry you through were you the devil himself."

Louvet warmly thanked him, and promised to do all he could to make it worth the good fellow's while.

At Argenton, where they put up the next evening, the whole population was in a ferment on account of the arrest of two volunteers, who had been found travelling without proper passports. A few yards from the town gates, one of the prisoners had suddenly drawn a knife, which he threw to his companion, bidding him use it, and had then plunged into the river, whence his body was recovered two hours later. The survivor had been thrown into prison to wait the perfunctory trial, which, in such cases, preceded summary execution. Fearing that the unfortunate men were his dear friends Guadet and Salle, Louvet was deeply depressed, though, in order to sustain his *rôle*, he was obliged to suppress all signs of emotion. It was not till long after he learned that they were not the late companions of his flight. The one who drowned himself was probably Rebecqui, the Girondist Deputy for Marseilles, an acquaintance, though not an intimate friend of the fugitive.

At Châteauroux the passengers' papers were again subjected to a severe scrutiny by a Jacobin agent, who looked into the conveyance to assure himself that "no Girondist should escape him." It was an anxious moment for all concerned. But the agitator missed the opportunity of his life when he failed to rummage amongst the pile of coats, cloaks, petticoats and bandboxes, which he must have observed in a corner of the wagon; for what would not Robespierre have given for the head of his very special foe?

It was here, too, that Louvet received confirmation of the news of Mme. Roland's death. When her name was mentioned, he could not refrain from murmuring a few words of pity for her death and admiration for her virtues. He could scarcely keep back the tears which started to his eyes as he thought of that noble woman facing with stoical courage the indignities and insults of her cowardly assassins. Her death would, he knew, be a terrible blow to Lodoïska, for in her she lost her dearest and most intimate friend. And what, he asked himself, had become of his wife? Had the wretches murdered her also? The thought unnerved him, and he sought to put it from him. This was no time for weakness. He would need all his pluck and resourcefulness, all his nerve and coolness, it he would reach Paris without disaster.

As the caravan approached the capital, Louvet's situation grew more and more dangerous. The travellers were examined two or three times every day, and the Girondist ran the gravest risk of being recognized in one of the crowded inns where he was

obliged to dine with his fellow-passengers. Moreover, the news of his friends which he obtained on the road from time to time saddened and discouraged him. At Vierzon, he heard of the death of Cussy; at Salbris, the execution of Kersaint and Manuel; and at Ferté-Lowendal, the pitiful suicide of the heart-broken Roland. Next there was the story of Lidon's cruel betrayal at the hands of the man whom he regarded as his dearest friend. He fought single-handed against two brigades of *gens-d'armes*, who were sent to arrest him, and when he felt himself on the point of being overpowered, blew out his brains.

The news of the tragic deaths of so many of his political colleagues and old friends filled the outlaw with despair. What was the use of further effort? He remembered how Robespierre delighted to strike at his victims through the women they loved. How was it possible that he could have let Lodoïska escape him? Even if he succeeded in reaching Paris, which was at least problematical, would it not almost certainly be to find that she was dead? Then why not put an end to his tortures forthwith?

In the midst of these melancholy reflections, the wagon entered Orléans, the capital of the Department which had elected him as its representative, and was now full of his triumphant enemies. The scaffold erected in the market-place was wet with the blood of his adherents (Louvetins, as they were called), and the prisons were choked with people suspected of attachment to the man who had once been the idol of the Department, and now stole into

the town as a fugitive, scarcely believing or even hoping that he would ever leave it alive.

Unhappily, the carrier had many packets to deliver and to collect, so Louvet was compelled to stay for four hours in a place where he could not without rashness remain for ten minutes. But, after what seemed an eternity of waiting, the caravan at last made a move. The travellers were allowed to reach the barrier unchallenged ; but here they were brought to a halt by the eternal demand to produce their papers.

" Our passports have all been examined," cried the carrier.

" That is not the point," retorted the officer of the guard. " Tell everyone to get out."

" Why ? " asked the tradesman's wife.

" Let everyone get out, I tell you ! "

At this the men all climbed out.

" The women too ! " shouted the officer. " It is so easy for men to put on women's clothes."

" I assure you that all the passports have been examined, and found correct," repeated the carrier in a trembling voice.

" Who's talking about passports ? I don't want to see passports. I want to see faces. I know what I'm about. Now, you women, out you get ; and none of your tricks, mind ! I'm going to look into the wagon myself."

On hearing these words, Louvet gave himself up for lost. He had probably been recognized and denounced. Well, the sooner the end came, the better —there are limits to human endurance. Still, he

would do his best to get through for Lodoïska's sake. Besides, he had been forced to play a game in which his head was the stake, and it was really too humiliating to be beaten by Robespierre. Thus, his sporting instinct, if nothing else, would have compelled him to play the game to a finish.

The women got down, leaving half the Girondist's body uncovered. Quickly and noiselessly, he threw some straw over his legs and drew the carrier's great coat over his head; then, taking a pistol from his breast-pocket, he placed the muzzle in his mouth, keeping his finger on the trigger, and waited.

Meanwhile, the officer carefully scrutinized every face.

"Is there anybody else in the wagon?" he demanded; but without waiting for an answer, he jumped in. His boot struck Louvet's thigh. He kicked the bandboxes, and overturned some of the clothes; his foot was pressed against the great-coat covering the fugitive's head; but he saw nothing.

"Gad! that was a narrow squeak!" cried the carrier, a quarter of an hour later. He was still as white as a sheet, and trembled all over.

At Étampes, next day, there was another alarm. An inquisitive Jacobin climbed on the step, and put his head into the wagon to read the passports; and, looking round, reckoned on his fingers in order to satisfy himself that the passports tallied with the number of the passengers. He counted them over two or three times, and then demanded if there was anyone else inside. He was not told

about the thin little man who lay half-smothered at the bottom of the cart, with two women sitting on his legs and thighs, a girl seated on his chest, and his head crushed under a soldier's knapsack, upon which the Jacobin often leaned to balance himself. But, at last, they were allowed to pass on their way.

In the town itself, Louvet had to assist, unwillingly enough, at the triumph of a Deputy on mission, who was returning in state to Paris. The route was gay with the national colours, and the whole population had turned out to do honour to the Mountaineer. As he passed there was a roar of " Long live the Citizen Representative ! " " Down with the Federalists ! " The spectacle scarcely tended to enliven the fugitive. Could these be the people for whom he had sacrificed himself ? He bitterly contrasted his situation with that of his enemy.

On the one hand was the man who had cheerfully given up all that made life worth living for what he deemed to be the good of his fellow-countrymen ; and on the other, the ignorant, corrupt, and sordidly ambitious Mountaineer, who had never made the smallest sacrifice, and had consistently used his ill-gotten power to further his own interests. The first found himself a fugitive, clad in rags, and forced to practice the most humiliating expedients to preserve himself from a criminal's death ; whilst the second, wherever he went, was almost deafened by the acclamation of the fickle multitude. Still, this was ever the way of the world, the Girondist reflected ; and had not the man now riding past been present

in the Convention when Lesage uttered the prophetic words, "The people have lost their reason; immediately they recover it you will perish!" In spite of all, he believed in that prophecy, which was so soon to be fulfilled.

Louvet was not sorry to leave the place behind, the more so because one of the women insisted on having the blind of the conveyance drawn in order that she might see the procession; thus unnecessarily exposing him to the greatest danger.

That day and the following night passed in the midst of alarms. The inns were full to overflowing, and at Arpajon, the travellers had the misfortune to put up at the house where the Deputy was expected at a late hour. When he heard this, the outlaw begged the landlady to show him to the least comfortable of her rooms at the top of the house, on the grounds that an invalid, such as he, ought not on any account to be disturbed during the night. He rightly thought that neither the Mountaineer nor his companions would deign to sleep in a garret; and although he carefully primed his pistols and put his opium close at hand, he was left in undisturbed possession of his bed.

The carrier, who had long come to the conclusion that his passenger was a person of more consequence than he cared to acknowledge, discreetly played up to him, and was ever ready to second him in an emergency.

"It's a pleasure to serve a man who has his wits about him, like you!" he whispered on one occasion, squeezing his hand.

At Longjumeau, when the travellers sat down to dinner, the public room was crowded with holiday-makers. Louvet had scarcely taken his place at the table when he noticed one of the visitors watching him intently. The fugitive went on eating unconcernedly, though with a spoilt appetite. Presently the man turned abruptly to the landlord, and said loudly enough for the outlaw to hear him :

" Do you take me for a song-writer ? For my part, I don't deal in that line." Was this a hint that he recognized the author of *Faublas ?* He next whispered a few words in the ear of the friend by his side, who thereupon began to hum some verses of one of Louvet's best known songs :

"Is it fear or indifference ?
I wish I could guess."

The fugitive scarcely knew what to think of the incident. The lines may have been introduced by chance, yet he deemed it prudent to take the earliest opportunity of leaving the table.

As the travellers approached Paris, all manner of precautions were taken lest they should be searched at the barriers ; but they were quite unexpectedly allowed to pass without a word. At the Rue d'Enfer, Louvet warmly thanked his fellow-passengers ; then, taking his conductor aside, he assured him that he would never forget the services he had rendered, and begged him to accept all the paper money he had left, amounting to a hundred francs, to which he added a gold watch, worth about six times that

amount ; and at the same time expressed his regret that it was not in his power to reward him as he would have wished to do. The two men grasped hands and parted : the carrier to return to his wagon, and Louvet to an inn to wait for a coach which one of his companions had promised to fetch for him.

Thus at two o'clock in the afternoon of December 6th, Louvet found himself alone in the heart of Paris, where he had a few lukewarm friends and innumerable deadly enemies, conscious that at any moment he might be recognized and dragged to an ignominious death. On the same day, at Bourg-la-Reine, Condorcet died like the Stoic and philosopher that he was ; but of this Louvet mercifully knew nothing.

CHAPTER XXVI

Louvet searches for Lodoïska—Reunion—Deserted by their friends—Brémont gives them half an hour in which to leave his house—Barbarity of this decision—They decide to die together—Louvet's bold course—Lodoïska's plan—Her ascendancy, and how she maintained it—Louvet's romanticism—A fresh asylum—Lodoïska builds a secret chamber—Faint-hearted friends—Lodoïska plans Louvet's escape—His letter—He leaves Paris in disguise—He is detained by a Government official—A momentous interview—An unknown friend—Louvet reaches the Jura Mountains—Homesickness—Anxiety on account of Lodoïska—His imagination plays him tricks—Schemes of vengeance—Safe arrival of Lodoïska—They suffer many petty persecutions—Their wanderings in search of a lodging—A folk-moot—Louvet pleads with the village magnates—Lodoïska bears him a son—The fall of Robespierre.

LOUVET directed the coachman to drive to the house of the friends with whom Lodoïska was staying when he had last heard from her. Dismissing the coach at the corner of the neighbouring street, he hastened to the door which he knew so well, and knocked. It was opened by a little boy, whom he recognized as the son of a Deputy—his father having often brought him to the Convention.

"How is this?" asked the fugitive. "Does not Citizen Brémont live here?"

"No," replied the boy.

"Who, then?"

"Papa; here he comes."

Steps were heard approaching from an adjoining room, and without waiting for more Louvet ran

downstairs, crossed the court and gained the street. He inquired of a servant, whom he met entering the house, where Brémont now lived, and hastened to the new address on foot.

He reached the house in safety, and the first voice he heard was that of Lodoïska. His blood sang! Without knocking, he rushed into the room. With a cry Lodoïska threw herself into his arms. That moment wiped out the memory of all his perils and misfortunes.

The mistress of the house, with her nephews and her niece, now came in to minister to the wants of the returned exile; and when they had brought him linen, clothes and food, they conducted him to his wife's room, and shut the door on them. Need we follow them further? Nobody can doubt the warmth of their affection for each other, but, in writing of his wife, Louvet never could learn to trust the unaided imagination of his reader.

Having seen him comfortably tucked up in bed, Lodoïska left the room to provide for his immediate needs. She soon returned with an anxious face.

"We are almost alone in the house," she said. "All the young people have left, and the niece passed by me to get her cloak, and went out without a word. I expect she will be back before long; still, I think she might have waited a little while."

"Oh, she'll come back right enough," replied Louvet, who had grown optimistic during the last hour. He believed in his friends; at that moment he would have believed in almost anybody. Besides, the girl owed everything to him and his wife; she

was as their adopted daughter, and they intended to make her the heiress of their small fortune. But she did not return ; fear had driven every other feeling from her heart, and she had taken the first opportunity of escaping from the house which sheltered the proscribed Girondist.

At half-past ten Louvet's wife awakened him out of a deep sleep. She was trembling violently, her features stiffened with terror. " My dear," she said in a broken voice, " I have bad news. Brémont has just returned, and gives you half an hour in which to leave his house ! I repeat his very words. Our oldest and most trusted friend refuses to receive you, is afraid even to see you ; sends us, in fact, to the Place de la Révolution ! "

For some moments the fugitive could scarcely believe his ears. Then his surprise gave way to indignation. Lodoïska's eyes were fixed on his.

" My only hope is in your courage," she said softly. " I have at least one consolation : you are no longer quite alone as in the Gironde ; and if we have to die, it will be together and in our own good time," she added, touching the opium which she likewise always carried hidden in her bosom.

Many of the Revolutionists took kindly to the idea of their wives committing suicide over their graves, and at the present juncture Lodoïska's words seem to have had a soothing effect on her husband. He braced himself to meet the new peril.

In order to realize its magnitude, it must be remembered that during the Terror the retreat was beaten at ten o'clock every night, and anyone found in the

streets of Paris after that hour was taken to the nearest guard-house, where he was called upon to produce his certificate of citizenship, bearing his name and address, the Section to which he belonged, and a careful description of his person. Louvet's old card was now, of course, worse than useless, and he had no other. Thus, to turn him into the street at that time was, as his wife said, to deliver him over to the executioner.

"What shall we do, dear?" asked Lodoïska, at her wits' end.

"Go and tell him he deserves that I should crawl this instant to his door and blow out my brains on his threshold; but for the sake of our old friendship, I have decided to die without compromising him. Yet tell him that no power on earth shall tear me from his house alive at this hour, and that nothing shall prevent me from leaving it, with every precaution, to-morrow evening at seven o'clock. If fear has quite turned his brain let him sleep elsewhere; some friend of thirty years' standing will not refuse to shelter him for a night—he is not proscribed. If he insists and threatens, say he has taught me one lesson, and if he would teach me another, he may go himself and denounce me. Let him bring my murderers to me, and thus save us both the trouble of sending me to them."

The message was faithfully delivered, for in spite of her softness Lodoïska could be nasty when the occasion required it of her. Still, we cannot help feeling a certain amount of sympathy with Brémont; for, after all, he had to consider the lives of his wife

and children. He had to choose between them and his friends—one or other had to go. Who can blame him if he sacrificed the latter? Louvet could scarcely be expected to see the matter in this light at the time, but reflection did not modify his views, and his judgment of his old friend seems unnecessarily harsh. It appears never to have occurred to him to imagine himself in Brémont's cruel position. Would he, under such circumstances, have sacrificed Lodoïska? We cannot believe it.

On hearing Louvet's words Brémont turned pale, and left the house in silence. Lodoïska returned to the room, bringing Madame Brémont, who was loud in condemning the inhumanity of her husband; but she protested overmuch, which led them to suspect the responsibility for the action was as much hers as his—a conjecture which was afterwards confirmed.

During the night Lodoïska carefully thought out a plan of action, which she determined to put into execution on the morrow. Choosing a remote quarter of the city, she would rent apartments in her maiden name, and when all was settled Louvet should join her. If she could once get him safely there, she thought she would be able to shelter him for a week, a fortnight, or even a month, before her neighbours found out who she was and denounced her; and when that time came they would have the satisfaction of going out hand in hand, feeling that they had lived long enough. Certainly those who despise death enter on a struggle of this sort with a distinct advantage.

"A whole month together!—think of it, my dear!" cried Lodoïska, clapping her hands with

delight at the thought. "By then we shall have lived more truly than many who die of old age! Like St. Preux, we 'shall not leave the world without having tasted happiness!'"

Lodoïska knew her man. This was the sort of thing in which his soul delighted. He took her in his arms and devoured her with kisses, craving the reader's indulgence on the ground that "those moments were at once the most delightful and the most melancholy of my life."

Not the least interesting feature of these memoirs is the insight they give us into the psychology of a great romantic love. Louvet was early persuaded that his wife was an extraordinary woman, and to a certain point we are inclined to agree with him; but the qualities which aroused his special enthusiasm were those common to the women of her race. Most women are at first set on a pedestal by the men who love them, but it is only the cleverer among them who succeed in maintaining the position after the first year of marriage. Lodoïska preserved her ascendancy to the last, and Louvet sometimes unconsciously reveals how she did it. Where she differed from the ordinary woman was in her remarkable aptitude for living up to her husband's romantic conception of herself; and although she loved him passionately, she had the wit to play the part of gracious divinity which he had given her. Other women would soon have tired of the situation, but Lodoïska never did; and, on the whole, she sat her pedestal rather gracefully, whilst Louvet was in raptures at her knees.

At seven o'clock the next evening, the young man who had received the outlaw before he fled to Caen, called to take him to his home once more, though he could lodge him for only three days, for some *sans-culottes* lived on the same floor, and the dividing wall was so thin that almost every motion could be heard in the adjoining apartment. A friend of his wife's next offered to shelter him, but she was so frightened during the first day that Lodoïska was obliged to take him on the morrow to her new lodging, although the hiding-place she was preparing for him was not yet finished.

He found that during his absence she had been busy with saw, plane and trowel in constructing with her own hands a secret chamber in the wall of one of her rooms. He was unable to assist her owing to his shortsightedness, yet five days later she had completed an ingenious and perfectly safe hiding-place, into which he could escape on the first alarm. The retreat was tolerably large, with a bench for a seat, and a kind of valve for renewing the air.

In this den the outlaw passed many not unpleasant hours, for he had matches and a candle to read by, pens, ink and paper, and a supply of provisions in case of accident. He eagerly read the journals day by day for news of his friends, and when that depressed him too much he turned for consolation to Virgil's *Georgics*, Delille's *Gardens*, and Gesner's *Idylls*. He ventured out only when his wife signalled that all was safe. They had neighbours beneath them as well as on the same floor, and the boards and dividing walls were thin. They, there-

fore, spread a stout carpet over the former and hung the latter with some thick tapestry. Lodoïska also made her husband a pair of coarse woollen slippers with strong horse-hair soles to enable him to take exercise without noise. In fact, no precaution which a loving woman could devise to ensure his safety was neglected.

They would have been fairly comfortable, in spite of the unavoidable inconveniences, had it not been for the constant dread of a house-to-house search for suspected persons which were still much in favour. Such a visit would mean almost certain destruction, for Lodoïska had been a well-known figure during the ascendancy of the Girondists, and Hébert of the Municipality and Amar of the Convention were her sworn personal enemies. The fugitive and his wife, therefore, slept in the last of their three rooms, and kept all the doors locked and bolted. Domiciliary visits were paid only at night-time, and they determined that if anyone knocked they would on no account open, and if their first door should be forced, they would still have time to prevent their enemies from taking them alive. For this purpose Louvet was careful to slip a pair of loaded pistols under the pillow every night. The couple often fell asleep, expecting to open their eyes in a little while only to close them again for ever.

Often at the knock of a belated lodger, awaking them with a start, Louvet would silently embrace his wife and look to the priming of his weapons. And yet he says, " my Lodoïska rose each day more charming than ever ! " An eminently satisfactory state of

affairs, as all will agree. Our friend, as we have before had occasion to remark, was no curmudgeon, but a confiding, open-hearted fellow, who boldly asks the world to rejoice with him in his good fortune. He was proud of his wife, and he lost no opportunity of saying so. But times and manners change. Nowadays we have a very proper contempt for this kind of thing. We call it sentimentality or mawkishness, and consider it the worst possible form. No modern husband could speak of his wife in this lyrical vein without provoking scorn and derision; it is only his conjugal misfortunes which a man with any pretensions to breeding would now think of proclaiming upon the housetops.

A little girl, with more courage than many of her elders, came every morning to assist Lodoïska in the household affairs and to purchase provisions, though the latter was obliged to go too, as this was the only means of procuring a portion for two. Louvet, of course, was never easy so long as she was out of his sight; but when once she returned, it was for the whole day. He himself laid the cloth, and in spite of his weak sight, did the carving, for he had reason to think that if he left it to her, she would give him the whole of the meat, fearing that he had not enough. After dinner, Lodoïska read, played the piano and sang to him; and then the pair sat down to a game of chess, pleasantly conversing the while in low voices. Thus the days passed agreeably enough, though most of their friends had apparently decided to forego the pleasure of visiting them. Yet they talked of them a great deal, some pitying the

fugitive, because he had not sufficient courage to put an end to his misery, whilst others condemned Lodoïska for her selfish conduct in uselessly exposing her life and theirs in the forlorn attempt to save her husband. In fact, they did everything (short of actually informing against him) which they ought to have known was liable to cast suspicion on the outlaw and his wife. "From such friends," piously exclaims Louvet, "the Lord deliver us!"

One man, however, who ten years before had benefited by the Girondist's generosity, now sought him out and hastened to offer his services. It had been quite a small matter which had earned his gratitude, but generosity consists not so much in giving largely as in giving opportunely. When Louvet had been abandoned by all the members of his own family, this man, who was little more than a stranger, readily hazarded his life and all that he had in assisting his benefactor to escape from Paris. It was, indeed, urgent that he should leave the capital with the utmost despatch. The circle was hourly being drawn closer and closer around him, and every day brought news of the arrest and execution or suicide of one or other of his political associates. Fortunately, this friend's business gave him special facilities for travelling between Paris and Switzerland, and before many days had passed he and Lodoïska had worked out a careful plan for Louvet's escape to the Jura Mountains. By February 6th, just two months after his return to Paris, everything—disguise, passport, conveyance—was ready for his flight.

On the evening of the last day Lodoïska locked her

husband in the secret chamber and went out to make the final arrangements for his journey. During her absence he occupied the time in writing her a letter which she would find after he had gone, containing his last wishes in case of mishap. It is an affecting document, bearing eloquent testimony to the intense emotional strain of the last few hours. An attempt was once made to render it into English, but that was by a Scotchman in 1795, and the result is not encouraging. Much of Louvet's prose, as I have said before, is quite untranslatable ; it is pitched in a key to which our language is ill adapted, and, generally speaking, his pathos in an English dress must be pronounced with a German accent. Yet the coolest among us can imagine what this parting must have cost them. If all went well, Lodoïska was to follow her husband in six weeks' time.

It was at daybreak, on February 7th, that Louvet again set out on his travels. Lodoïska accompanied him across Paris ; but at the end of the Rue Charenton, he left her in the carriage and walked briskly towards the barrier. From the window she anxiously watched his retreating figure. She caught her breath as she saw him airily present his fabricated passport for the inspection of the sentry who stopped him, and breathed again only when he was allowed to pass on his way. When he was out of sight, she motioned to the coachman to drive home.

At Charenton, Louvet found his friend waiting for him, and they at once proceeded on foot to Villeneuve St. George. Here their papers were cursorily

examined by an officer of the guard, who was easily deceived by the military disguise of the two travellers. Louvet is sure that he looked every inch a defender of his country. He wore a short, black woollen jacket, with trousers to match, a tricoloured waistcoat, and a wig of straight, black hair, much affected by the ultra-Jacobins of the period, surmounted by a red liberty cap of the approved style. Added to this, he carried an enormous sabre; and a ferocious moustache, which he had sedulously cultivated during his enforced retirement, afforded convincing evidence of its bearer's ardent patriotism.

Twenty miles from the capital they joined the stage coach plying between Paris and Dôl. The next day all the passengers were taken to the Municipality to have their papers attested by an officer of the local committee of surveillance. Louvet handed him his passport. The officer read it attentively, looked steadfastly at its owner, held it back, and asked for those of his companions. After carefully examining them one by one he returned them, but still retained Louvet's.

"Wait a moment," he said, when the latter held out his hand for it.

The outlaw began to grow uneasy. At length, all his fellow-passengers were dismissed and he remained alone with the inspector.

"You are going to rejoin your regiment?"

"Not at all; you have read my passport carefully enough; I am going on business."

"Ah, yes, on business."

"Yes; give it me, then!"

"You seem to be in a great hurry," said the inspector, drawing back his hand.

"Which is more than you are," retorted Louvet. "Don't you see that all the other passengers have left, and that I shall miss the coach if you detain me any longer?"

"But haven't you anything to say to me?"

"No," replied Louvet bluntly, in the style of the day and of his dress.

"Well, I have something to say to you, anyway."

"Sacrebleu! then say it and have done with it!"

"I have to tell you," said he, grasping one of the outlaw's hands and thrusting the passport into the other, "that I wish you a safe journey with all my heart."

"Good-bye! good-bye!" cried Louvet, as he ran towards the coach. He never succeeded in identifying his unknown friend.

The fugitive reached the Jura Mountains without accident, and his companion hastened back to Paris to tell the good news to Lodoïska.

Whilst he was alone the Girondist made it a point of honour not to leave French soil. During the first weeks of his exile, therefore, he lived in a cavern within easy reach of neutral territory. Here he began to re-write the memoirs which he had begun whilst with Mme. Bouquey. He suffered horribly from nostalgia, a complaint to which Frenchmen are peculiarly susceptible; and, of course, he was utterly miserable separated from Lodoïska. To cool his head

he plunged into the primeval forests of ancient Helvetia, wandered by the side of yawning chasms, hung fascinated over seething cataracts, and moralized and gushed about St. Preux and Julie. He made the rocks echo with the name of his beloved, carved her initials on the bark of a thousand trees, and, in fact, made such a fool of himself, that it is quite impossible to doubt the sincerity of his passion.

Meanwhile, the six weeks agreed upon passed and she did not come. He began to lose hope. The meagre news which reached him from Paris was not reassuring. On her account he suffered torments of anxiety, and there were times when he felt convinced that she was dead. Then his imagination played him all sorts of scurvy tricks, and he formed mad schemes of vengeance. He would take a fresh disguise, return to Paris, and force Robespierre at the point of the pistol to sign his wife's reprieve. The insuperable difficulties of the project alone caused him to abandon it. Then he determined to write to the tyrant, offering to give himself up in her stead; hoping that Lodoïska would consent to this plan and live for the sake of the child she was soon to bear him. The letter was written, though never despatched, for something happened which made it unnecessary.

One day (it was the 21st of May, 1794) a fellow exile, with whom he had recently struck up friendship, took him by a mountain path to a spot commanding an extensive view of the surrounding country. On the way Louvet told his new friend of his fears for his wife's safety; he was in a despondent

mood which spoilt for him the glorious scenery stretched at his feet.

"Why do you meet trouble half-way?" said his companion. "I'll wager you will see your wife before long."

"Never, citizen. I have long given up all hope of seeing her again."

For a few moments the other silently scanned the surrounding country. Then his eyes were attracted by a small object in the far distance moving in their direction.

"It is a cart," he said at length. "There are only two persons in it: a woman and the driver. Look! perhaps it is your wife!"

"For God's sake, citizen, don't mock me with vain hope!"

Nevertheless, he looked, and, sure enough, he saw a woman in a travelling dress, with her luggage piled by her side. He turned away without recognizing her, for love is blind, and Louvet was short-sighted. But at that moment his ear was thrilled with the most ravishing sound, which he likens to the voices of Milton's heavenly spirits. It was addressed to the driver, and the word was "Stop!" Our friend's sense of humour was intermittent. But the next moment he held Lodoïska in his arms.

Even now their troubles were far from over. The liberty-loving Switzerland of their dreams was a delusion; that country was divided by factions almost as violent as those which tore their native land, and here they were subjected to all sorts of petty per-

secutions. Although Lodoïska was expecting almost at any moment to become a mother, nobody would receive the fugitives, or even let a room to them. For several days they wandered from village to village without finding a lodging. At last they found a farmer at Saint Barthélemy, who was willing to let them a cottage ; but before he could do so, it was necessary to obtain the consent of the Commune. The elders accordingly gathered under the village oak to discuss the question. They refused to sanction the transaction, fearing apparently lest the child, when born, should be left at the charge of the Commune. Perhaps they had been bitten before. Who knows ? In despair Louvet asked permission to speak. This was granted. Never had he been so eloquent, says Lodoïska, who told the story to Riouffe. Moved to tears by his impassioned words, the wily clodhoppers straightway reversed their decision. A few days later Lodoïska presented her husband with a son.

Then came news of Robespierre's downfall.

CHAPTER XXVII

Louvet returns with his family to Paris—A financial crisis—He opens a bookseller's shop—And publishes some famous books —A visit from Wolfe Tone—Social successes of Louvet and Lodoïska—Their popularity—Louise Fusil describes their personal appearance—They dine with the Talmas—Louvet resumes his seat in the Convention—He defends the Girondists' memory—Refuses to join in the proscription of his enemies—His growing influence—Speech on the trial of the extremists—Insurrection of the 1 Prairial—A terrible sitting—Murder of the deputy Féraud—Lodoïska again saves her husband's life—The end of the Mountain—Louvet's funeral oration on Féraud—He is elected President—Notre Dame de Thermidor gives a *fête*—Louvet's toast—Reaction—Failing health—Cowardly attack on Lodoïska—Louvet's contempt for his enemies—His death —Lodoïska poisons herself, but recovers—Her last years—Louvet's son, grandson, and grand-daughter.

OWING chiefly to the activity of piratical publishers during his outlawry, Louvet, upon his return, found himself face to face with a grave financial crisis.

In a note appended to the first edition of his *Mémoires* he bitterly reproaches the men who had taken advantage of his misfortunes to rob him of almost all the property which yet remained to him. He nevertheless set himself energetically to the task of averting the threatened ruin, and the journals of 22 Pluviôse (10th of February, 1795) announced his intention of opening a bookseller's and publisher's establishment at Number 24, Galerie Neuve, in the Palais Égalité (Palais Royal).

Lodoïska valiantly assisted him in the enterprise, and for a while the business was eminently successful.

During the first year he published quite a number of famous books, including his own *Récit de mes périls*, the *Mémoires d'un détenu*, by Riouffe, the companion of many of his adventures, and, most important of all, the *Appel à l'impartiale postérité*, the forbidding title under which Mme. Roland chose to hide her marvellous memoirs. The last work was edited by her old friend Bosc, and as the decree of confiscation still deprived Eudora Roland of her parents' property, Louvet generously handed over to her guardian all the profits on the publication, to be used for her benefit. The appearance of his *Récit de mes périls* brought many customers, whilst the curious flocked to the shop in the hope of catching a glimpse of the heroine of Louvet's romantic narrative. Among the latter was Wolfe Tone, the Irish patriot, who had just won over the Government to his ill-fated scheme for the invasion of Ireland. In his autobiography we find the following entry :

" Bought the *Constitution Française* at the shop of J. B. Louvet, in the Palais Royal, and received it at the hands of his wife, so celebrated under the name of Lodoïska. I like her countenance very much. She is not handsome, but very interesting. Louvet is one of those who escaped the 31st of May, and after a long concealment and a thousand perils, in which Lodoïska conducted herself like a heroine, returned on the fall of Robespierre, whom he had been the first to denounce, and resumed his place

in the Convention. . . . . I am glad I have seen Lodoïska."

But the curiosity of others was not so easily satisfied, and the romantic pair were invited everywhere, and as the fame of their adventures spread, became the lions of the season. The sprightly *Souvenirs d'une actrice*, by Louise Fusil, contain an interesting account of her meeting with the Deputy and his wife:

"One day," she says, "when Julie Talma and I were visiting Mme. de Condorcet, I heard Louvet's name pronounced. It was in 1794, after the Terror, and the company spoke of the proscription of that Deputy, and a work on the subject which he had just published. In this little book he told in detail how he had escaped death through the heroic devotion of a woman, whom he called Lodoïska, who afterwards became his wife. I took an early opportunity of procuring a copy of the brochure, and read it with keen interest. One never fails to trace a highly-coloured mental portrait of the heroes of whom one knows the history. I figured Louvet as the Chevalier de Faublas turned politician; I imagined that the lightness of youth had been replaced by the nobler and more serious bearing of manhood, but that beyond this there was no change. Above all, I imagined that Lodoïska was ever beautiful and ever adored. This thought enhanced the charm of the work I was reading. I told Julie how much the book interested me, and remarked how delighted I should be to meet M. and Mme. Louvet.

"'Nothing is easier!' said she, 'for they are to dine with me to-morrow, and I intended to invite you.'

"I accepted with alacrity, and arrived early at her house, so great was my impatience to see my hero and heroine. When they were at length announced, the mistress of the house rose and stepped forward to meet them. I followed her almost involuntarily; but I was not a little surprised to find in the place of the handsome Faublas I had imagined with such complacency, a thin, bilious little man, of awkward bearing, and in the shabbiest attire. And the beautiful Lodoïska!—ugly, dark, pitted with smallpox, the most common-looking person! I was so disenchanted that I could not believe my eyes.

"After Julie had proffered the first congratulations on their escape, and on the courage and devotion of Mme. Louvet, she introduced me to this charming couple.

"'Here is one of my friends,' she said, 'who had the greatest desire to see you; she has read with avidity the narrative of your perils, and scarcely breathed until she knew you were safe!'

"Louvet bowed with a smile which was as much as to say, 'Ah, you thought you were going to meet a Faublas!'

"I fully believe he had read the astonishment on my face. We spoke again of that time of misfortune, and of the ingenious method by which Lodoïska had shielded the unhappy proscript from death, and the conversation ended by intensely interesting me; for Louvet was a man of wit and

distinction, and his wife, in spite of her unprepossessing appearance, was a remarkable woman. It was her husband's indiscretion to make her a heroine of romance and to paint her in such seductive colours in his *Faublas;* if he had plainly called her Mme. Louvet he would have rendered her only the more interesting, and would have spared her the ridicule which she had not provoked."

The good Fusil does not mince matters. "Ugly" is an imprudent word for one woman to use of another unless she is very sure of her own personal attractions, and, even then, it is scarcely kind. We know, however, that the actress was a great beauty, so that her testimony, in this respect, is above suspicion. But to confess that the undistinguished appearance of Louvet and his wife spoilt the romance for her is to betray a deplorable superficiality of judgment. To many, it is this fact which gives their story its distinction, and makes it so adorably human. There are so many handsome heroines that we hail an ugly one as a positive relief. And, after all, there is not much merit in romancing about a beautiful woman, the first fool who comes along will do that; but it requires the soul of an artist to divine, as Louvet did, the more rare and subtler beauty which so often lies obscured by obvious defects of form and feature.

"I knew Lodoïska," said M. Barrière in the introduction to his edition of Louvet's memoirs; "she was no longer young then, but her features were still regular. Her bearing was at once simple and noble.

In the habitual calm of her countenance it was easy to divine an exalted soul and a strong will."

His words do not necessarily invalidate Louise Fusil's testimony as to Lodoïska's ugliness, for women do not always fulfil the promise of their youth.

The truth of her impression of Louvet's personal appearance is fully corroborated by Mme. Roland :

" Louvet is an unhealthy-looking little man, weakly, short-sighted and slovenly. He seems a mere nobody to most people, who do not observe the dignity of his brow, and the fire which animates his eyes at the expression of any fine thought. Everyone is acquainted with his pretty novels, but politics owe more important obligations to him. It is impossible to have more wit, less affectation, and more simplicity than Louvet. Courageous as a lion, simple as a child, a man of heart, a good citizen, a vigorous writer, in the tribune he can make Catiline tremble, he can dine with the Graces, and sup with Bachaumont."

Although the Convention had abrogated the decree of outlawry against the Girondists on December 7th, 1794, it was not until March 8th of the following year that Louvet and his surviving political associates were allowed to resume their seats in the Assembly. Three days later, Louvet moved " That the Girondist Deputies who had taken up arms in Normandy after May 31st had deserved well of their country." The Convention naturally passed to the order of the day. It could not, indeed, do otherwise, without com-

pletely disavowing its past. But Louvet felt that he owed this tribute to the memory of his friends; and, as a secondary consideration, it afforded him the opportunity of telling all whom it might concern that though the times had changed, his principles had not changed; and when he saw Isnard, Lesage, Larivière, and other survivors of the Gironde, in their hatred of the Mountain, incline more and more towards Royalism, he did not hesitate to break with them. "Neither the horrors of that sanguinary *régime*," says Mallet du Pan, writing of the Girondists' implacability, "nor the oppression under which they groaned during the dictatorship of the Committee of Public Safety; neither their misfortunes, nor the death of so many of their number upon the scaffold; neither experience nor reason, the duty of closing the bleeding wounds of their country and of giving her peace, had touched these theorists. They would sooner see the universe in ashes than abandon their design of submitting it to their doctrines."

There is little doubt of the general truth of the indictment. "There are few people," says Rivarol somewhere, "who will sacrifice their rhetoric to their country, and who, having a talent for speaking, have the humanity to hold their tongues." It is to Louvet's lasting honour that he was one of these. Almost alone among the surviving Girondists, he refused to resume the quarrel. He felt that it was time to put the phantoms of history behind him; and he, at all events, was content to leave the dead to bury their dead.

One gathers that his sufferings, no less than the constant and exalted affection which had for long ruled his life, had at once ennobled and mellowed his character, and saved him from the bitter and revengeful thoughts which too often controlled the actions of his former colleagues. Again and again his voice was raised urging the claims of pity and justice, and he set the fine example of an outlaw who, in the hour of victory, refused to join in the persecution of the authors of his proscription.

His oratory, too, in this second phase of his political career, strikes a graver and a deeper note; it is informed by a wide and tolerant humanity which is absent from his former discourses. These qualities soon made themselves felt, and Louvet's influence in the Convention grew daily. But though he rejected all idea of personal vengeance, he pressed for the punishment of Carrier and the representatives on mission who had bathed the country in blood. His speech on the trial of these men is a masterpiece; in it he relates some of the most revolting atrocities of which Carrier was guilty with a seeming calmness and indifference which recalls the deadly irony of Swift at his best.

On the 4 Floréal (April 23rd), he was appointed a member of the commission charged "to prepare the organic laws of the Constitution," which came into force three months later; and on the 13 Floréal (May 2nd, 1795), in a superb oration, he proposed the restitution of the possessions of all who had been sentenced by the Revolutionary Tribunal. The measure was violently opposed, not only by the

Mountain as a reactionary measure, but also by the Girondists, who desired that their party alone should profit by any such act of clemency. Whereupon Louvet cried :

" I tell you that nobody was tried by the tribunals of 22 Prairial or by those of May 31st : everybody was assassinated ! "

He never lacked courage, but thus to brave the anger of friend and foe alike in the interests of humanity was surely one of the most courageous acts of his life. His eloquence snatched victory from his opponents, and although the principle of confiscation was maintained, a decree was passed restoring the goods of all condemned since March 10th, 1793, except those of coiners, *émigrés* and Bourbons.

On the 12 Germinal (April 1st), the surviving leaders of the Mountain, acting in concert with notorious agitators of the more turbulent Sections of Paris, made an attempt to overthrow the rule of the men who had brought about the downfall of Robespierre, and were generally known as Thermidorians. But there was such bungling in the organization of the rising that even the Minister of Police had his suspicion aroused, and the affair proved a dismal failure. So discreditable was the performance, indeed, that the Convention seems to have accepted it as convincing proof of the degeneracy of contemporary conspirators, and treated the leaders with mildness and contempt. Mistaking this attitude for pusillanimity, the rebels planned a much more serious rising to take place on the 1 Prairial (May 20th). The ostensible grounds for the insur-

rection were the misery caused through the exorbitant price of bread, the prosecution by the Convention of the chiefs of the great Committees of the Terror, and the forcible closing of the Jacobin Club by a body of young Thermidorians, the personal followers of Fréron, known as the *Jeunesse dorée.*

On this occasion more mystery surrounded the plans of the conspirators than was the case in Germinal, and the insurrection very nearly proved successful. The Convention had scarcely assembled, when a crowd of yelling and ragged men and women (many of whom were drunk), led by former members of the Revolutionary army, and the "furies of the guillotine," surged into the outer courts of the Tuileries demanding admission into the legislative chamber. When this was refused, the rioters tore down the gates, shouting for "bread and the Constitution of 1793"; and made a frantic dash for the entrance doors of the Convention. Here they were opposed by a small body of National Guards, with fixed bayonets, which, from mistaken notions of humanity, they refrained from using. The result was that they were forced back amid a shower of bullets, and the insurgents burst into the hall of the Convention.

The President put on his hat—by way of protest—what else could he do? Every other President had done so when circumstances proved too much for him; why should not he? But whether he was covered or uncovered, the rioters meant to have their will, and steadily swept forward into the Chamber. At this moment a young and intrepid Deputy of Girondist sympathies named Féraud, who had recently

returned from the army of the Rhine, threw himself before his colleagues, and, baring his breast to show the scars of wounds he had received in the service of his country, implored the intruders to withdraw. Unhappily, the rioters mistook him for Fréron, and threw him to the ground. A moment later, his head, mounted on a bayonet, was waved before the Deputies, who sat in their accustomed places calmly awaiting the issue. Their conduct in every crisis such as the present was admirable.

The Revolutionary leaders of all parties had very little to learn in the matter of contempt for death from the great Romans whom they sedulously imitated. Boissy d'Anglas, the President, especially distinguished himself throughout the day. Louvet afterwards paid eloquent testimony to his heroism, and was furnished by the hero himself with a multitude of details which had unfortunately escaped his notice. Self-consciousness was one of the strongest characteristics of the age. But is a man's courage necessarily any the less because he feels himself to be cutting a fine figure? To say that the hero is the man who lives to tell the tale is really too cynical.

But to return to our muttons. Boissy d'Anglas certainly did bear himself with remarkable coolness on the 1 Prairial. In spite of bayonets, pikes and pistols levelled at him, he refused to be intimidated, or to put the motions desired by the insurgents. It was not until he was utterly spent with fatigue, after occupying the chair for over six hours, that he resigned the presidency to Vernier. The rioters took

this opportunity of compelling the Deputies to leave their seats, and to come into the body of the hall, where they were at once surrounded by the armed mob.

The new President was now forced at the point of the bayonet to put various propositions to the vote, and these were at once declared to be carried. At this point Louvet rushed to the tribune in order to protest against these illegal proceedings. He had scarcely reached it, when a woman was seen forcing her way through the howling multitude. By the most violent exertions, she at length arrived breathless opposite the orator in the tribune. If he succeeded in making himself heard there is little doubt that all would be over with him, and his head, like that of Féraud, would be paraded through the Assembly. Yet he persisted in his effort to address the mob; whereupon Lodoïska (for it was she), without a word, drew a knife from her bosom, and fixing her eyes upon him, pressed the point against her heart. Louvet, knowing that she was quite capable of carrying out her implied threat, wisely held his tongue. The whole incident was pure melodrama, of course, so were most of the events of the Revolutionary era; but melodrama or no melodrama, her action probably saved her husband's life.

Towards midnight, Kervélégan, Bergoeing, Chénier, and Raffet, the commander of the National Guard, arrived with a strong detachment of soldiers and a band of the *Jeunesse dorée*. They entered the hall with fixed bayonets, and after a brief hand-to-hand fight, succeeded in expelling the rioters, and arresting

the murderer of Féraud. The latter was led forthwith to the guillotine; but was rescued at the foot of the scaffold by a band of armed insurgents; whereupon the troops of the Convention marched with a strong detachment of artillery into the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, where he had taken refuge, and threatened to bombard the Section unless he were instantly handed over to them. Intimidated by this threat, the insurgents gave up the fugitive, who was immediately executed, and the revolt was soon after stamped out.

Tallien and the triumphant Thermidorians made the insurrection an excuse for issuing wholesale proscriptions against the surviving members of the Mountain. Billaud-Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, and Barère were sentenced to deportation, and a special military commission was appointed to try the Deputies implicated in the insurrection. Although Louvet joined Fréron and Legendre in an effort to save the lives of these representatives, who had been his deadly enemies, six of them, namely, Romme, Goujon, Duquesnoi, Duroi, Bourbotte, and Soubrany, were sentenced to death. After hearing their sentence the condemned men attempted to commit suicide with a knife, which they passed from hand to hand. The first three were successful; the others were dragged, still bleeding from their wounds, to the scaffold.

As the most illustrious survivor of the Girondist proscription, Louvet was selected to pronounce the funeral oration on the murdered Féraud. A special sitting of the Convention was called for this purpose

on the 14 Prairial (June 2nd), and the most elaborate preparations were made to add to the solemnity of the occasion. All the representatives attended in full costume, each wearing a *crêpe* band round the left arm. A section of the hall was set apart for the municipal officers of Paris, and the ambassadors of foreign powers sat facing the President. The walls of the Convention were decorated with garlands and festoons of oak-leaves, and a black funereal urn, ornamented with golden stars and patriotic inscriptions, was placed on each side of the President. The spot were Féraud died was marked by a white marble tomb, surmounted by a bust of Brutus and the arms, uniform, and tricoloured scarf of the murdered Deputy. A large orchestra was placed in the extreme left of the building. Louvet was greeted with loud applause as he ascended the tribune.

The speech is our chief source of information regarding the insurrection of the 1 Prairial, and is a characteristic example of the rather theatrical style of oratory in vogue during the last years of the Republic. Apart from its historical significance, it is chiefly remarkable as an eloquent entreaty to all patriots to forget their mutual enmities, and to join hands over the grave of Féraud. Delivered on the second anniversary of the insurrection against the Girondists, the speech afforded an excellent opportunity for a panegyric of his dead friends—an opportunity which Louvet was not the man to neglect. The passage devoted to them marks his highest oratorical achievement.

The speech added greatly to his prestige, and on the 1 Messidor (June 19th), he was elected President of the Convention. In that capacity, three days later, he formally replied to the Dutch Ambassadors, at the same time taking the opportunity of uttering a proud threat against England; and on the expiration of his term of office, he entered the Committee of Public Safety. This was the culmination of his political career. Soon the reaction was to set in, but for the time being he was one of the most popular men in Paris. His wit made him a welcome guest in every *salon*, and he was invited everywhere—to the Talmas', Mme. Tallien's and Mme. de Staël's.

On the anniversary of the 9 Thermidor there were great doings. The whole capital gave itself up to rejoicing. A *fête* was held in the hall of the Convention in commemoration of the fall of Robespierre.

All the representatives attended in full costume, and, led by the orchestra of the National Institute of Music, joined lustily in the choruses of Chénier's patriotic hymns, the "Hymn to Humanity," by Bauer-Lormian, music by Gossec, and the dithyrambic hymn on the "Conspiracy of Robespierre and the Revolution of Thermidor," words by Rouget de Lisle, etc., etc. Then somebody called for "the song of songs," and the *Marseillaise* was sung kneeling, as the manner then was. Larevellière-Lépaux, an able, modest little hunchback, a future Directeur, whose ambition soared no higher than the foundation of a new religion which he called Theophil an

thropy, now rose to make a speech.* And a very good speech it was too, both as to manner and matter.

The Committee of Public Safety, he said, had some news for the Convention which would prove to the friends of Terrorism that the reign of justice had also its triumphs. It will be our glorious privilege, citizens, to unite in singing on the same day the songs of justice, humanity, and victory. The allusion was to the battle of Quiberon, which had just been won by Hoche, seconded by Tallien, who had arrived with the news the evening before. It was a great day for Tallien, and he was overwhelmed with congratulations.

When the festivities in the Convention were over, Mme. Tallien, Notre Dame de Thermidor, whose kind heart and easy virtue when she was Marquise de Fontenay had been the means of saving so many from the guillotine, presided at a banquet in the character of Wisdom, a part which her exquisite beauty enabled her to assume for a brief space with unstudied grace—she made no pretension to sustaining the *rôle* for long. She was the leader of the smart set of her day, and introduced the fashion of going clothed in little but her modesty. She had a pretty foot and delighted to show the marks of the rats which had bitten her when in prison. But she could get few to believe her. The cynics maintained that

* It is said he once complained to Talleyrand that although his religion was far better than the old, he could not induce people to accept it. What should he do ? " Get yourself crucified, and rise again the third day," was the sagacious reply.

Elected to the Council of Five Hundred by the Department of Haute-Vienne, he fought with all his strength against the tide of Royalism which was fast carrying all before it. But his health, undermined by his sufferings, was already beginning to fail, and he almost welcomed his exclusion from the Council on the partial renewing of that body in May, 1797.

Meanwhile the Royalist journals continued to drag him daily through the mire, and when by way of retaliation he accused Isidore Langlois, the editor of the *Messager du Roi*, and a notorious renegade from the Republicans, of being "one of the authors of the assassinations of the 13 Vendémiaire, Year IV., a counter-revolutionist, covered from head to foot with innocent blood," he was judged guilty of libel, and condemned to pay five hundred livres damages with costs. Emboldened by this judgment, the Gilded Youth marched in a body to the orator's shop, and offered the most brutal insults to Lodoïska. She retired to the back of the shop, followed by cries of "*À bas la belle Lodoïska*!" and snatches from the *Réveil du Peuple*, whilst Louvet, who on the first alarm had flown to her protection, paced to and fro before his door, casting furious glances at the jeering crowd. When the assailants saw that their prey had escaped them, they turned upon her husband.

"Well, sing the *Marseillaise!*" yelled one of them derisively.

Whereupon he instantly threw open the door and replied with infinite contempt:

"Que veut cette horde d'esclaves?"

For a moment the demonstrants were silenced by this stinging retort, but quickly recovering themselves, they were about to rush on their victim when he was rescued by Raffet, the Commander of the National Guard, with a strong patrol which had been summoned by the neighbours. The mob was at length induced to disperse. But scenes of this kind were repeated almost daily, and Louvet was at last compelled to remove his establishment to the Rue Grenelle-Germain, opposite the Rue de Bourgogne, formerly the Hôtel de Sens.

Utterly broken in health, dispirited and disillusioned, Louvet had now, at the age of thirty-seven, the appearance of an old man. As he reflected on all the sacrifices he had made for the liberation of his country and the welfare of his fellow-citizens, he must often have asked himself bitterly whether, after all, he had not foolishly thrown his life away. He must have asked himself whether Mme. Roland and Vergniaud, Guadet and Barbaroux, and his other trusty comrades in the fight, had died in vain. The principles for which he had lived and fought, and from which he had never wavered, were now openly disavowed even by his surviving colleagues who had suffered for them. So far as he could see, his whole life work had ended in smoke. He felt himself to be desperately ill, he needed rest, but instead of leaving him in peace his enemies ridiculed and libelled Lodoïska. That was the last straw. Towards the end of August, 1797, the Government, on the recommendation of Barras, appointed him consul at Palermo ; but it was already too late.

The end came suddenly. At one o'clock in the morning of August 25th, Lodoïska and a trusted friend, who was acting as nurse, had just prepared a cooling drink for the sick man, and the latter was about to hold it to his lips, when she noticed that he had ceased to breathe. She called Lodoïska, who, as she approached the bed-side, said quite calmly :

" He is dead. Do me the favour of calling M. Lamarque."

Whilst her friend was present she had by a supreme effort of will suppressed all signs of emotion. She wanted to gain time, for she had long ago made up her mind what she would do when this dreaded moment arrived. It was not until she was alone with the dead body of the man she had loved all her life that she gave way to despair.

When her friend returned with Lamarque, she calmly told them that she had swallowed the opium which she always carried on her person. Lamarque threw himself at her knees and implored her to let him fetch a doctor ; but to all his pleading she answered that since her husband was dead life was insupportable to her.

She then handed a sum of money to her friend, begging her to act the part of a mother to her boy. She said they could live with her relatives, where they would be quite comfortable, and as he would inherit the whole of his parents' fortune, his future was well provided for. All this she said in a low, even voice without faltering ; and nothing the others could say succeeded in shaking her resolution. Then Lamarque had a happy thought. Quietly

leaving the room, he returned a few moments later bearing her child in his arms.

"Since you refuse to live for yourself or for us," he said, "live at least for our little friend here. Is he not already unhappy enough to have lost such a father? Do not empoison his first years by depriving him also of a loving mother's care."

When Lodoïska felt the baby hands clinging to her, and saw the frightened little face pressed against her bosom, she suddenly burst into tears, and Lamarque, knowing that he had attained his object, rushed off for the doctor. For two days her life hung by a thread, but then she took a turn for the better and ultimately recovered.

For some years after her husband's death Lodoïska managed the business with conspicuous ability and success. Nobody was better informed as to all that was known of the martyred Girondists, and she kept up a regular correspondence with their surviving relatives. It was owing to her indefatigable zeal, seconded by the efforts of the Rolands' friend Bosc, that the manuscripts of the memoirs left by the fugitive Deputies at Saint-Émilion were at length discovered. Writing in 1865, M. de Lecure states that he recently had the privilege of reading several letters of Madame Louvet's, which proved her to have been a woman of noble heart and brilliant wit. The last of these letters bore the date 1814, and was addressed to her dearest friend, Mlle. Mestais of Nemours. On her death she was buried by her husband's side on the small family estate of Chancy,

in the commune of Prenoy (Loiret); and when in 1847, the estate passed out of the hands of the Louvets, the two bodies were removed to the cemetery of Montargis. A plain marble slab, inscribed simply with their names, marks the last resting-place of Louvet and his faithful Lodoïska.

On reaching manhood, Louvet's son lived in strict retirement at Montargis in the Department of Loiret, the constituency which had returned his father to the Convention. Little is known of his career. Towards the end of his life he wrote a long and eloquent letter in a democratic journal complaining of the mysterious and persistent abusive persecution to which, on account of the name he bore, he had for many years been subjected. His sudden death in 1846 was the subject of a judicial inquiry. He left a daughter, who married M. Le Grand, Chief Road Surveyor of the Department of Indre. In 1854, his son, M. A. Louvet de Couvray, published a book entitled *Histoire du Principe d'autorité depuis Moïse jusqu'à nos jours*, followed eleven years later by a fifty-paged pamphlet, *Les Hommes Providentiels*—dreary works both. For the sake of the name on the title-page, I made a conscientious effort to read the first book, but life is short, and (I confess it in all humility) I did not get beyond the Pentateuch. But even from this I gathered that Louvet's grandson was a man of wide reading and some originality of thought.

A solitary anecdote, quoted in the introduction, relating to an atheist moralist of the author's acquaintance, and his endeavour to regulate the

transient attachments of his pet dogs, shows that he had inherited Louvet's sense of humour and something of his talent for periphrasis. The style of both works is correct and, indeed, not without distinction; but it is a far cry from *Faublas*. The British Museum copy of the *Histoire du Principe d'autorité*, acquired in 1862, had, until a few days ago, never been opened. Need I say more?

THE END

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